



ДМИТРИЙ ФЕДОРОВИЧ

УСТИНОВ



ВО ИМЯ ПОБЕДЫ

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annotation

Memoirs of D.F. Ustinov are devoted to the heroic work on the creation of weapons and the provision of them to the front during the Great Patriotic War. Through personal memories and reflections, the author shows a broad panorama of pre-war life, with great warmth talks about workers and engineers, scientists and designers, production commanders and party workers - about people who selflessly worked at the enterprises of the People's Commissariat of Armaments in the name of Victory.

Dmitry Fedorovich Ustinov In the name of victory

To readers

The further the Great Patriotic War goes into the past, the more visible and bright becomes the feat of the Soviet people, who, having defended the freedom and independence of their socialist Motherland, utterly defeating a strong and insidious enemy, made a decisive contribution to delivering mankind from the threat of fascist enslavement. The feat of the Soviet people

in the last war is the feat of the soldiers of the army and navy, who fought with weapons in their hands against the hated enemy, the feat of the home front workers who forged victorious weapons.

The generation of Soviet

people, to which I belong, entered into conscious life after the Great October Revolution. He had a difficult but happy fate - to actively participate under the leadership of the Leninist party in the socialist transformation of his native country, laying and strengthening the foundation of its economic and defense might, which became the foundation of Victory in the war imposed on us by Nazi Germany.

By the will of the Party and the people, for a long time I had the opportunity to work on the creation of weapons for the Red Army and the Workers' and Peasants' Red Fleet, side by side with the creators of weapons, go through all the military tests. During the Great Patriotic War, I was entrusted with heading the People's Commissariat for Armaments.

This book is personal reminiscences and thoughts about the experience, about the pre-war period and about the most memorable events of the war years for me, about the heroic past of our Motherland. With thousands of invisible, living and strong threads, this past is connected with today and tomorrow. The experience gained during the years of severe trials serves the cause of strengthening the defense capability of the USSR, maintaining the combat power and combat readiness of the Soviet Armed Forces at the required level, and defending the gains of socialism and peace on Earth.

Part one Involvement

Chapter 1 Origins

Father's house

In the life of every person there are events and facts that are especially dear to him. It is they that form the outline of our life, are inseparable from the most important in ourselves, in our character and way of thinking. For each of us, such events and facts are unique,

are unique. And yet, the memories of them, the feelings that they evoke, are somehow subtly similar. Maybe because they are associated with ideas about the Motherland, about honor, dignity and duty, about one's place among people. Such are the memories of the father's house, the

threshold of which means for a person the beginning of all beginnings, of the unique warmth of the parental hearth, of maternal affection, of the charm of native nature, and of many other things that entered us in childhood and adolescence and became, as it were, ours. an integral part.

I confess that my heart ached painfully when, at the end of the summer of 1982, I arrived in Kuibyshev to present the Order of Lenin to the city and did not find the house in Samarskaya Street in which I was born and grew up. The old house was demolished. Of course, I understood that he had outlived his life, but it was difficult to come to terms with the idea that I would never see him again ...

My children and grandchildren were standing next to me, and I, looking around the greatly changed, deserted, but so familiar yard, suddenly seemed to see with my own eyes the house of my childhood. It was two-storied, very small, made of wood, with small, half-sighted windows; nowadays, you can't call it anything other than a house. Yes, and the city itself, as I remember it in childhood, was all squat, dusty. The tallest building in the area at that time was the fire tower, which we sometimes climbed. And from here the boundless distance opened up, in the blue haze one could see the opposite bank of the Volga, which seemed inaccessible to us. Later, as we grew older, we swam across the Volga more than once, and the distant shore became accessible. The tower, fairly dilapidated, has survived to this day. Only somehow it was completely lost among modern residential buildings and multi-storey

buildings of the institute that grew up in the neighborhood. In general, the city has changed beyond recognition. Today it is one of the most beautiful not only in the Volga region, but also in the country. The heroic figure of a worker rose

above the Falcon Mountains, throwing deltoid planes over his head, like wings. This is a symbol of the Kuibyshev aircraft industry and at the same time a symbol of the spirit of the Volga people, their inspiration.

The pre-October biography of the city has more than three centuries. He had seen a lot in his lifetime, experienced a lot. The Samara poor went to fight for a better share in the detachments of Stepan Razin and Emelyan Pugachev. Vladimir Ilyich Lenin began his revolutionary activity in Samara. Much in the city is connected with Maxim Gorky. From here Alexey Nikolaevich Tolstoy came to literature. "... Man," he wrote, "absorbs here into his soul this expanse, this strength of the earth, this immensity, and charm, and will. Here the mind wanders through visions of a noisy and rich past and dreams of the limitless possibilities of the future." How profoundly and precisely the people's perception of the Volga is expressed! An episode from my distant childhood has been preserved

in my memory. Somehow, having bought, having swum to our heart's content, my friends and I started talking about distant lands, where the Volga begins, from where it carries its waters. A gray-haired, but still strong, wiry loader intervened in our conversation. He often watched the children's games on the shore, and a kind smile always shone in his eyes.

"So you say: the Volga, where does it come from, what is it," the old man said suddenly. We immediately fell silent and turned to him. - Yes ... Volga, brother, this is a river for all rivers. I've been where she is begins...

The old man paused, looking into the distance. We were also silent. But now he started up and strangely he continued in a rejuvenated voice: "It

flows there, I tell you, a very small stream. It can be seen that the spring is hidden in the ground. This place is called the source. A brook to a brook - and now a river. And it flows along the earth, collecting more and more streams, until it becomes such a beautiful river.

The old man was silent again for a long time. We were about to run into the water, we started to stir, and lingered to watch the old porter light his beat-up pipe.

"And people are like rivers," he suddenly spoke again, puffing out a puff of smoke. - Each has its own sources, its own whirlpools, backwaters and rifts on the way. But if a person is young

lives by honest work, he will not regret his shirt for a comrade, then he himself will always be needed by people. And when people are together, they merge like streams and get a human river. Perhaps stronger than our mother Volga ...

How right that old Volgar was! Perhaps he happened to see how streams of popular anger merged into a mighty stream of revolution, how he washed away from his native land everything old and obsolete, which prevented building life according to the new, most just laws of socialism.

The Great October opened a new era in the history of our Motherland and all mankind. AND my hometown was born again.

Time has sped up tremendously. Only the volume of industrial output produced in the city has increased more than a thousand times in the post-October years. Instead of dusty and bumpy streets, there are wide asphalt rivers of avenues, green boulevards, spacious squares and squares, instead of unprepossessing blind buildings - beautiful, bright multi-storey buildings.

When we arrived in Kuibyshev, it was a warm, sunny, fresh September day. Such days are not uncommon in early autumn on the Volga. We headed to the embankment. Here the flowerbeds blazed brightly with flowers, the greenery of the trees was slightly diluted with crimson and yellowness. I breathed, as in the days of youth, easily, with full breasts.

Suddenly, a young beautiful couple in a wedding dress came out to meet us in a cheerful, noisy environment. So much happiness and joy emanated from them that the sun seemed to have increased on the embankment. We approached the young people and said hello. We learned that they were both students. I congratulated them, wished them a friendly, happy family life. We got talking - fellow countrymen will always find common topics. Before I say

goodbye, I ask: - Maybe we can take a picture for memory? - And we wanted to ask you about it, Dmitry Fedorovich! young people answer. We found both a camera and a photographer - one of the comrades who was with us. The first secretary of the Kuibyshev regional party committee, Evgeny Fedorovich Muravyov, and I stood next to the newlyweds ... The picture turned out to be successful - both for the young and for me in good memory. Memory ... How much poorer we would become internally if we suddenly lost the ability to keep in memory what once happened to us, to keep in our hearts a living connection with the past, with events and accomplishments in which we happened to be involved! It is true what they say: the present grows out of the past. There is no future witho

If we imagine memory as a kind of treasury that is constantly replenished, then memories of the father's house constitute, it seems to me, an important part of its main fund. Our attachment to our father's house, to everything connected with it, is a particle of memory not only about our own past, but also about the past of our people, our country. Without it, a person is like a tumbleweed: he does not have a deep, root connection with the earth that gave birth to him. Not without reason in our people such people are called Ivans, who do not remember kinship. In the memory of the past, in particular in

the memory of the father's house, lie the life-giving sources of many good and bright qualities of the human personality. In the house on Samarskaya Street - it is

still called by the same name - we lived on the ground floor, in two small rooms, six of us: father, mother, three older brothers and me. They lived together, although it was crowded, and often hungry and cold. My father, Fyodor Sysoevich, had a

strict but fair disposition. Having drank plenty of peasant dashing, in search of a better life, he left an allotment of parched land in the village of Moksha, and in 1891, together with his wife and first-born Peter, he arrived in Samara. At first, he was interrupted by odd jobs in a cab, and then got a job at a factory.

Hard work hunched his father. He came home tired, washed himself and sat down at the table. I remember his dark, cast-iron hands. Strong, strong, they knew a lot. It seems to me that my first ideas about work are connected with them.

It was they who, in my mind, combined with kindness, justice, and honesty. Such hands could not deceive, could not work badly, because they were the hands of a working man. "What is the work of your hands - such is the honor," said the father. I remember these words, although their meaning became clear much later. Any work that benefits people must be done honestly, conscientiously, so that one would not be ashamed of it either in front of oneself or in front of the people. This is a work honour. And she is very dear to a person. Losing her means losing yourself. I have known many wonderful workers in my life.

All these very different people are made similar by their life position, which was once formulated for the first time for me by my father: what is the work of your hands - such is the honor. Excellent position! And I am deeply happy that for more than six decades I have seen next to me, felt the

reliable shoulders of just such people. All of them are near and dear to me. But especially, and I think this is understandable, my first mentor and example is my father.

In general, the father was not talkative, he treated the word with care. He had no education, but he knew how to clearly and definitely express the essence of things in his own way. He could understand and forgive a lot, but he did not tolerate lies at all. Most of all, the father respected industriousness in people, he taught his children to work

from childhood. I began working immediately after graduating from the parish school in June 1919 as a courier in the provincial forestry committee. True, he did not quit his studies either, he enrolled in evening general

education courses. I remember the day when I brought home the first paycheck. How great was the money owed to the little boy - the courier! But they were received for work. And the family managed to make this event a festive one for me. My father, as an equal, shook my hand, my mother's eyes welled up with tears of joy. At the family council, they decided to send me a new thing with this money - a shirt and boots. In our family, things were treated simply as a necessity. They took care of them, of course, but they understood well that there is much more valuable in life. Every morning

now my father's voice woke me up: - Get up,
get up, working people! Much later, I

realized that he felt sorry for me, and if he lifted me out of bed, then there was no longer an opportunity to let me lie down for an extra minute. I really wanted to sleep, but I jumped up, washed my face with cold water, hastily ate a potato with a slice of bread - breakfast - and went to work with my father. I walked beside him, striving to fall in time with his wide stride, and felt the gaze of my mother seeing us off. At the crossroads our paths diverged. We stopped for a second, my father gently

pushed me in the back: "Come on, Mitya," and briefly looked at me, as if hugging me. For another moment, I looked after him, and then, forgetting about my "adult" solidity, skipping rushed in a goblet. All his life, from childhood to the last breath, my father worked. With what

joy he accepted October! "I, brother, now have a new meaning in life," he said. It is a pity that he did not have a chance to live under Soviet rule for long. In 1922 my father died. It happened in Samarkand, where my brother Nikolai served at that time and where my father and mother came to escape from hunger.

The country's agriculture was devastated by the war. And then a drought hit him, especially severe in the Volga region. The inhabitants of the industrial centers were starving. I remember how terribly thin my father was, his face became sallow gray, he suddenly aged and became completely silent - it happened that you wouldn't hear a word all day. The mother's face seemed to have only eyes. Yes, and I could hardly drag my feet, swayed, as they say, from the breeze and was all the time in some strange, half-drowsy state.

Many houses were empty in those years. Death has become a familiar guest in almost every

yard. People left the city, went to the village, hoping that it would be easier to feed themselves there. It was a big, nationwide misfortune ... Somehow in the middle of the night I woke up from another attack of acute pain in my stomach and heard a cracking voice:

- Let's all die here, Fedenka ... Let's die, sorry for Mitenka, he's still quite small. I felt chilly, I held my breath. Minutes stretched painfully long, and the father was silent. Then he suddenly said heavily, as if he were moving cobblestones:

Let's go to Nicholas. To Samarkand. Tomorrow. Gather things. -

Yes, what is there to collect, Lord! the mother exclaimed. -

OK. Let's go. I don't know if I'll get there ... So at

the end of 1921 we ended up in Samarkand. It was easier with food here, but, apparently, this could no longer help my father. Soon he was gone. My mother, Efrosinya

Martynovna, took the loss very hard. For more than thirty years she lived with her father soul to soul. Infinitely kind, soft, affectionate and caring, the mother seemed to complement the father, and, as I now understand, it was largely thanks to her that the father's influence on us acquired completeness. After the death of his father, his mother began to fall ill

and died out by the summer of 1925. For some reason, most often, when

I think about my mother, the following picture arises before my eyes: I, still a little boy, am returning from the "fishing", from the Volga, proudly carrying a mating of perches. Mother meets me, and her face brightens: some kind of help, but still. How joyful it was in her soul when she affectionately said: "Now go for a walk, you are my worker!"

Of course, my mother felt sorry for me: I was the youngest in the family, and there is always a special attitude towards the youngest. But a simple Russian woman, who grew up in constant work and care, she felt in her heart that to pamper a boy, to protect him from the difficulties of life, means to raise him weak, weak-willed, unable to overcome hardships and hardships.

A.M. Gorky has wonderful words that a person should not be pitied, but respected. Respect! This, it seems to me, is one of the indispensable conditions for success in the difficult task of education. And of course, not only children. After all, a person is formed, improved as a person all his life. But if respect for work, for the people around him, has not been embedded in him since childhood, if it is not fixed and developed in later life, if it is not intertwined, not fused with self-esteem, it is difficult to expect that he will become an intelligent person and worker, wherever the waves of fate carried him.

The first experience of respect for people, memorable precisely for its genuineness, pure truthfulness, I received in the family. In our house, even in the most difficult times, an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust was maintained. It was created, of course, by my father and mother and supported by my older brothers. The lessons of respect for people learned in childhood have turned into my immutable life credo.

And today, with deep tenderness, with filial gratitude, I think about my parents, who, with their ingenuous pedagogy, instilled in my soul respect for working people, taught me to see the highest meaning of life in serving them ... Remembering my father's house, I see

my brothers - Peter, Nikolai, Ivan . They were much older than me, I learned a lot from them and owe a lot to them.

All my brothers went through working "universities". Following the example of their elder brother Peter, they joined the revolutionary movement early. And after October 1917, with weapons in their hands, they defended the Soviet government from the White Guards and interventionists. Ivan died at the age of nineteen in a battle against counter-revolutionary gangs in Orenburg, while Peter and Nikolai fought in the ranks of the Red Army until the victorious end of the Civil War.

I remember how Peter came to us in Samara at the end of 1917. The city was seething. Samara workers took power into their own hands already on the second day after the Second Congress of Soviets took place in St. Petersburg and Lenin's proclamation "To the workers, soldiers and peasants!" sounded throughout the country. The experienced Bolshevik Valerian stood at the head of the Samara provincial committee

Vladimirovich Kuibyshev, who since March 1917 headed the Council of Workers' Deputies of Samara. He led the struggle against the Provisional Bourgeois Government for the transfer of power to the Soviets, and then the October armed uprising in Samara. Subsequently, Kuibyshev became one of the organizers and political leaders of the Red Army, a prominent party and statesman. In his honor, my hometown was renamed in 1935. By the time Peter arrived in Samara, the struggle for the establishment of Soviet

power in the city had reached its utmost intensity. Peter was in high spirits. He, according to his mother, has changed a lot. Still would! More than three years of the front of the world war, wounds meant a lot. But the main thing, nevertheless, was, probably, that Peter had matured, tempered politically, morally. On the eve of the February Revolution, he was arrested for revolutionary agitation. But the overthrow of the autocracy saved Peter from the royal court and reprisal. The soldiers freed him. He participated in the creation of the Red Guard detachments in Rostov-on-Don, fought against the Kaledin and Krasnovites. In one of the battles he was again wounded, unconsciously captured by the White Guards, sentenced to death, but fled. You can imagine with what delight I looked at Peter, listened to his stories. He was very much like his father, only perhaps he was bigger. They say about such: oblique

fathom in the shoulders. Peter possessed remarkable physical strength: apparently, both natural becoming and many years of work as a loader at Samara marinas and factories had an effect.

Without even giving himself a day of respite, Peter went to his factory, with the workers of which, back in 1914, he participated in the May Day demonstration, for which he was first captured by the tsarist secret police. He was remembered at the plant, he was immediately accepted into his working family. Peter was actively involved in revolutionary work. Soon he was elected deputy chairman of the Samara City Executive Committee of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. In the spring of 1918, when the situation in the republic, including in the Volga region, became extremely aggravated, Peter, together with Guy Dmitrievich Guy, was entrusted with the formation of a detachment to fight the White Czechs. The brother

spoke of Guy with great respect. He, like him, went through the front, was promoted to officer for military distinctions. Gai Dmitrievich had extensive experience in the revolutionary struggle, in which he participated from 1903, was an excellent organizer and a surprisingly sociable person. It seems to me that Guy and Peter were the best match for each other. When the detachment was formed, it was led by Guy. Peter was appointed his deputy, and

Nikolai went to the detachment as an ordinary soldier.

Subsequently, when the detachment was transformed into a division, which entered the heroic annals of our army as the Iron Samaro-Ulyanovskaya, Peter led the 1st Simbirsk regiment - the one that liberated V.I. Lenin from the White Czechs. I am proud that my brother was the co-author of the telegram sent to Ilyich by Guy on behalf of the Red fighters who liberated Simbirsk. The content of this telegram is widely known:

"Dear Vladimir Ilyich! The capture of your hometown is the answer to your one wound, and for the second - there will be Samara!

Ilyich sent an answer:

"The capture of Simbirsk, my native city, is the most healing, the best dressing for my wounds. I feel an unprecedented surge of vivacity and strength. I congratulate the Red Army soldiers on their victory and, on behalf of all working people, thank you for all their sacrifices."

The Lenin telegram caused an unprecedented upsurge among the fighters: "Give Samara!" A month later, Samara was

liberated. Some time later, Peter became the brigade commander of the 25th Chapaev division, participated in the battles to eliminate kulak gangs in Ukraine and Belarus.

Until the very end of the Civil War and foreign military intervention, Nikolai also fought in the ranks of the Red Army. Then he was sent to work in the Samarkand military registration and enlistment office. Here he joined the party. When my father and mother and I came to Nikolai in

Samarkand, he served as the chief of communications of the ChON headquarters - special forces.

On the second or third day after our arrival, Nikolai introduced me to the secretary of the Vokzalny district committee of the Komsomol. His last name was, as I recall, Yaroslavtsev. "Here is my brother, Dmitry," said Nikolai. -

He does not want to sit at home, he is eager to fight. Yaroslavtsev squeezed my hand tightly and laughed:

- And you seem to have strength! So it is necessary to use it, as they say, in business. You're here, come on, for starters, take a closer look at the guys from your street, get to know each other, delve into it. It is necessary, brother, to create a Komsomol cell. We have a lot of work, and there are not enough combat guys. How can you do it? - Will try. "So we will consider this your first Komsomol assignment," approvingly

said Yaroslavtsev, and, fervently shaking his fair-haired forelock, he shook my hand once more.

I completed the order. Two months later, in January 1922, Yaroslavtsev, having met me, said: -

Wait a minute, Ustinov, there is a conversation. You are a lad, by all appearances, and really fighting. Yes and you have a literate, I will say, considerable. You understand politics, right? I was embarrassedly silent.

"Well, well, don't be modest," Yaroslavtsev laughed. "I saw the guys hovering around you. This, brother, is good. How old are you? - Fifteenth. - So I say, it's time for you to join the

Komsomol. Thought about it? - Think. - And what? - Shy: what if I'm not fit yet? - What do

you mean "I'm not good"? You drop

it! Write a statement. The Komsomol members will decide... Soon the Vokzalny regional

Komsomol organization of Samarkand accepted me into its ranks. And two weeks later I volunteered for CHON. I

was assigned to the headquarters as a telephone operator. From the very first days, I plunged headlong into a new, completely different from everything that was before, the combat life of the Communards. They were subject to special requirements. Here is what, in particular, was said in one of the orders for the ChON of Samarkand and Amu Darya regions: "Special purpose units must be ready at any moment to repel an attack by both external and internal bourgeoisie. In order for every communard of the CHON to say at any moment: "I am ready," he must have military training, know the duties of a commander in all types of service, introduce iron exemplary discipline into the ranks of the CHON, and have clarity of the upcoming tasks and goals of the CHON.

We had to perfectly know not only our rifle, but also a machine gun, a grenade, a revolver, and to master them perfectly. Classes were held according to the regulations and instructions of the Red Army for at least two hours a day. Field exercises were also regularly held, from which no one was exempted. The discipline in the classroom was very strict.

Special-purpose units were formed on a territorial basis from communists and Komsomol members who had reached seventeen years of age. I was accepted into the CHON as an exception - it helped that I was quite tall and strong as a guy, had an education and wrote beautifully. "We need such fighters," said Nikolaev, chief of staff of the ChON region, "we need ..." I remember Satarov, the commander of the Samarkand platoon, an

energetic, tireless, loud-voiced man. With a platoon, he managed famously. And it must be said that

¹ Party archive of the Samarkand Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan. F. 226. Op. 1/1. D. 229. L. 23.

Chon's platoon numbered several hundred people. It consisted of three departments - Novogorodsky, Starogorodsky and Vokzalny, in urban areas. I was a member of the Vokzalny district department. It was based on the party cells of the station.

Our main task was to protect the objects of the district, and above all the station, access roads, warehouses. It was the liveliest place in the city, where there were always a lot of people. Most of the goods and, most importantly, food were delivered here. It was precisely here that the enemy sought to inflict the most sensitive blows to the Soviet regime. Communards patrolled the streets at night, stood at guard posts, accompanied transports with food, came to the aid of dekhkans in the villages attacked by the Basmachi. Sometimes it was necessary, together with the Red Army units, to participate in active hostilities against large Basmachi bands. The times were troubling. Foreign imperialists sought to use the enormous backwardness of Turkestan,

the small size of the working class, and the religious fanaticism of the masses to fight against Soviet power. They staked on the counter-revolutionary Basmachi, whose large gangs continued to operate in the region. In the early 1920s, imperialism, primarily English, made attempts to activate the Basmachi in Turkestan, including in the Samarkand region, and increased the supply of arms and ammunition to the gangs. Basmachism has turned into open political banditry.

Every day news came about the bloody crimes of the Basmachi. They killed party and Komsomol activists, burned villages, and stole cattle. Provocations, bandit raids were not uncommon in our region. Shots were fired, blood was shed. After fights with the enemy, we sometimes missed our comrades. But their death did not relax us. On the contrary, the desire to end the enemy as soon as possible and at all costs grew stronger in my heart.

I was in a friendly communard family until the summer of 1923, then I volunteered for the 12th Turkestan Rifle Regiment, located in Khujand. The environs of Khojent were teeming with Basmachi. Our regiment, together with self-defense detachments created from local residents and volunteer detachments of red policemen, carried out operations to destroy them. One or another squadron, or even the entire regiment at once, participated in the battles.

The fight was not for life, but for death. It was necessary not only to destroy the inveterate enemies, but also to open the eyes of the dark, intimidated, downtrodden dekhkans, people deceived by mullahs and beys. Regimental commissar Karpov never tired of reminding me of this task. Talking with the Red Army, party and Komsomol activists, he repeated:

"Do not forget, comrades, that we are lucky to live and fight in historical times. We bring the light of truth and freedom to the long-suffering Turkestan land. Each of us is a representative of the Soviet government and, therefore, a representative of the new life that is being established here ... Yes, we felt ourselves

to be representatives of the Soviet government, and this obliged us to evaluate our every step, every deed with particular exactingness. Evaluate not only from the standpoint of the current moment, today's specific situation, but also from the point of view of the ultimate goals and interests of our struggle.

I remember the words of the commander of the regiment Takmurzin - an ardent, extremely mobile man, a native of the Kuban Cossacks. Somehow, the Basmachi attacked the pro-Darmeys, who were traveling to the village of Digmay, located about 16 kilometers from Khojent. A squadron of our regiment was sent there, which defeated the gang, and captured many Basmachi. It turned out that among the prisoners there were many poor people. Explaining to the Red Army why it is impossible to approach all the Basmachi with one measure - not in battle, of course, there they are all enemies who must be destroyed, the regiment commander said:

- Here, some irresponsible fighters say that we should also have a conversation with the captured Basmachi in the same language - in the language of bullets and checkers. So it is, but not entirely. We must distinguish who, by their very nature, is an enemy of our power, and who is deceived, intimidated by the mullah and kurbashi. If we turn his face to a new life, he himself

he will meet the same kurbashi with a bullet!

I cannot fail to mention our chief of staff. Lean, trim, always immaculately shaved, in mirror-like boots, he talked with us Red Army soldiers not so often, but each meeting with him gave a lot. The chief of staff clearly and simply stated even the most difficult task, explained the situation, the features of the current moment. He rarely raised his voice, and it was not necessary: any of his commands were executed immediately and unquestioningly, and he himself served as a model of endurance and diligence. It was Vasily Danilovich Sokolovsky, who later became a prominent military leader, Marshal of the Soviet Union. For over a year and a half, I happened to be in the thick of things in Turkestan. I saw with my own eyes what

Soviet power meant for working people, I realized that to be devoted to it means not only to work with dignity, but also to defend it with dignity. I realized that love for the Motherland goes hand in hand with hatred for its enemies. Merging together in the soul of a person, they form a wonderful fusion of faith in the victory of the ideals of communism and practical work, active struggle in the name of achieving this victory.

On the road

In 1923, the main forces of the Basmachi in the Samarkand region were defeated. The country became more and more firmly on the rails of a peaceful, creative life. And I was drawn to my native Volga region.

Frankly, I really wanted to stay in the army. I became related to the fighters and commanders. I liked both firm military discipline, and a clear internal routine, and constant readiness at any moment to rise in alarm, go on a campaign, and fulfill a combat mission. However, my years were not enough, and I had to part with this dream. But as the most sacred, I carried through my whole life the memories of the

Communards-Chonov, of the Red Army, of friendship and comradeship, which are stronger than fire, stronger than death. More than once I have seen the soldier's commandment in action: perish yourself, but save your comrade. Forever preserved in my heart is love for the army, for people of a difficult and honorable profession, the high meaning of which is to defend their homeland.

Looking ahead, I will say that my whole life has been inextricably linked with the cause of defending the Motherland, strengthening its defense capability. In 1976, the party entrusted me with the leadership of the USSR Ministry of Defense. And, meeting with young soldiers of the 80s, I saw features familiar to me from a young age: devotion to the cause of the revolution, determination to defend our native land with the breast, loyalty to the holy brotherhood of soldiers, conscious readiness for a feat.

What were we Komsomol members then, in the early 1920s? How did you live, what did you dream about? The atmosphere of those years is resurrected in memory. Tough, hard days. Just now - in November 1920 - the heroic assault on Perekop and the liberation of the Crimea put an end to foreign military intervention and ended the Civil War. But in the Far East there were battles with the White Guard detachments. Blood was shed in the fight against the Basmachi. Ruin. The shops and factories were dead. Hunger. Agriculture was undermined. Cold. Many mines in Donbass were flooded, there was not enough fuel. It was difficult, very difficult. But the general mood is that we will overcome difficulties. We Komsomol members have enough to do, we cannot and do not want to stand aside from the gigantic work being done by the Party. Lenin's speech at the Third Congress of the Komsomol is fresh in my memory. How far ahead looked V.I. Lenin! What bright, alluring distances he opened before us!

We are constantly turning to the future ourselves. Hungry, naked and barefoot, we argued until we were hoarse about how we would live, work, what wonderful order - our revolutionary order - would be established throughout the world. We were ready to give our lives for the achievement of this great goal - communism. But really, seriously think about

how to practically achieve it, Vladimir Ilyich helped us. He said that it was the youth who had the task of creating a communist society. His word addressed to us young people shook everyone to the core. This means that the building of communism is a real life task that will be solved not by anyone, but by me, my peers, together with the communists, together with those who made the October Revolution, defeated the White Guards and interventionists. Lenin's call to study, linking education with participation in the common

struggle of all working people against the exploiters, kindled genuine enthusiasm in us. And always as fresh as decades ago, Ilyich's words sounded and sound that being members of the Youth Union means doing business in such a way as to give one's work, one's strength to the common cause.

Pictures of stormy Komsomol meetings and debates come to mind. Our disputes over ideological questions were especially heated. Yes, this is understandable: after all, the situation at that time was very difficult and complex. We had external enemies who were not sobered by the crushing defeat inflicted on them by the young Soviet Republic. There were also internal enemies who skilfully disguised themselves and tried to use the inexperience of the youth in order to sow doubts about the goals and objectives of the revolution, to instill petty-bourgeois views and morals. I must say that we sensed the enemies, as they say, inwardly and gave them, and not only them, but also everyone, as we called them, "staggering", an active rebuff. The main thing that was in us was a constant interest in the common cause, the desire to fulfill it as best as possible, to be in the thick of things, on the line of events. I felt the same vital interest, the same militant

Komsomol atmosphere at a Komsomol meeting in one of the units of the Moscow garrison. I spoke at it with great excitement, I felt as if I was speaking on behalf of my entire generation. Of course, we Komsomol members of the 1920s differed in many ways from today's Komsomol members. We did not have such a high level of education and culture. But in the main thing, in what constitutes the essence of the Komsomol character, the life position of a Komsomol member, we are united. This refers to selfless devotion to the party, to communist ideals, selflessness in work for the good of the Fatherland, intolerance towards class enemies, and readiness to defend the Motherland.

We often hear how young people complain that they were supposedly born late, that the time for heroes and exploits has passed. I cannot agree with this. How not to recall here the words of Maxim Gorky that there is always a place for a feat in life? Everyday life constantly confirms that this is indeed the case.

I recall a major exercise of the troops and forces of the fleet of the Soviet Armed Forces "West-81", held in the fall of 1981. During the airborne landing of the Guards, Junior Sergeant A. Uporov hit the barely opened parachute dome of Private L. Manokhi. The parachute domes of both paratroopers began to go out. In a matter of seconds, the young warriors did the only thing possible in their position: one cut off the tangled lines, and the other pulled out the reserve parachute ring. So they landed - together on the same parachute, and immediately rushed to the attack ...

After the battle, I talked with the paratroopers. Still quite young, very modest guys, the same, in general, as everyone who serves in our Armed Forces, in units and on ships. The fact that it was their lot that fell to a difficult test, an accident. But it is not at all an accident how the soldiers behaved in a critical situation. They themselves were embarrassed when their actions were called a feat, they confidently declared that everyone in their place would have done the same. And I didn't have the slightest doubt about

that. A lot of evidence of the greatness of the soul of the Soviet man, his selfless fulfillment of his patriotic and internationalist duty is provided by everyday life. They live, work, serve next to us, among us are the heroes of our time. Ours means Soviet. In a single glorious formation, Nikolai Ostrovsky and Vitaly Bonivur, Pyotr Dyakov and Nikita Izotov, Alexei Stakhanov and Valery Chkalov stand shoulder to shoulder,

Alexander Matrosov and Yuri Gagarin.

Speaking of them, I think how much the Communist Party has done and is doing to educate the youth, how carefully, attentively and demandingly it raises new generations, teaches them to perceive life in all its depth and complexity, to recognize their role and responsibility in solving the problems facing the country. tasks. In adolescence, the direction of a person's life

line is outlined, and often determined. What it will be depends largely on how deeply a person realizes his place in the revolutionary transformation of the world. And here the role of senior comrades, communists, mature people, wise in life, is especially great. I have been very fortunate in this regard. But this is a separate conversation.

And then, in October 1923, I, a Red Army soldier just demobilized from the army, was heading from Samarkand to Makaryev. My brother Nikolai, who had also just been demobilized from the army, was appointed here as an assistant to the chief of police. Together with us

Our mother also went.

Makaryev is a small town in the Ivanovo province, located on the right, high bank of the Ushka River, a tributary of the Volga. It got its name from the ancient monastery located here. After a big fire that happened shortly before 1812, Makaryev was almost rebuilt. The building was carried out according to the "star" plan, borrowed from Kostroma. The center of the city is Revolution Square. It was framed along the perimeter by a peculiar ensemble of two-story red brick houses, and streets radiated from the square in all directions.

We settled temporarily in the apartment of a school teacher. Soon my brother was given an apartment in a house for party and Soviet workers. This house in the city was called respectfully and even with some pride: "our Smolny", and I will not hide, it was pleasant to know that I live in it.

People of different age and character lived in Smolny. But there was something subtly common in all of them. At that time I was not quite conscious, but I felt well the attractive force emanating from them. At that time I could not give this feeling a precise definition. And only much later I realized that it was the charm of pure, open, accessible people who possessed that calm strength that is forged only in the struggle for a new life. There was not even a shadow of arrogance, arrogance or arrogance in them, although they occupied high posts by Makaryev standards. They considered these positions of theirs not as a source of benefits and privileges, but as a duty to work, to work harder, better, more persistently than others. They were people obsessed with work. It's a pity that I didn't get to know any of them really closely - the

age difference was too great. But the example of their life, a considerable part of which passed before my eyes, even fleeting neighborly communication with them, Nikolai's laconic stories about them - all this left an indelible mark on my heart. My own, albeit small, but my own experience told me that extraordinary people live and work next to me. And I really wanted to be like them.

The Makaryev period, as well as my whole life, is rich in meetings with wonderful people, communication with which gave me a lot. I went to study

after a short family "meeting" at a vocational school. It was also possible to go to a secondary school or to a pedagogical school, which existed at that time in Makaryev. But I wanted to get a working specialty, to become a skilled worker. Growing up in a working environment, I knew and loved her well. In my father, in my brothers, in the fighters and commanders, in the party and Soviet workers whom I happened to know by that time, I unmistakably felt something special - this "something" is sometimes called a working bone. This is probably correct, but I would define

him as solidity.

In a word, I really wanted to become a worker and saw the surest way to this in my studies at a vocational school. She was, in fact, the prototype of the current

vocational schools, had a good material base for that time. It should be noted that the Makarievsk vocational school was later named after her former student, Hero of the Soviet Union, Private Yu.V. Smirnova. His immortal feat, accomplished during the years of the Great

Patriotic War, became a symbol of the unbending fortitude of the Soviet man, the solidity, strength of his character. This feat is no accident. I think that the Makaryev vocational school did a lot for the formation of Yuri Smirnov as a person.

The school was built as a single complex. It included a two-story red brick educational building, workshops, utility and household premises, houses for teachers and craftsmen, a steam power plant that provided the vocational school with electricity. Then, in the conditions of acute energy starvation in the country, it was downright luxury, it allowed not only to conduct classes regularly, ensure the uninterrupted work of school workshops, but made it possible to arrange wonderful holidays and weekends - with electric light! - evenings of rest.

Classes at the school lasted from eight in the morning until six in the evening. The first half of the day was devoted to the study of general education disciplines and theory in the specialty, the second - for the actual vocational training. It was held in workshops and organized in such a way that each student got acquainted with several professions, but mastered his main one well. Therefore, in the first year of study, all study groups worked in turn in the foundry, model, blacksmith, metalwork and mechanical workshops, and then, when specialization began, most of the time was devoted to working in the workshop in the chosen profession. This kind of polytechnicalization made it possible

to train workers with a broad technical outlook, with a variety of skills, capable of working in any industry, which was very important at that difficult time when industry was experiencing an acute shortage of qualified specialists. This was well understood by the leaders of the school, its teachers, and we, the students. We were engaged, without any exaggeration, with interest, with a twinkle. Dilapidated equipment broke down - it was repaired at inopportune hours under the guidance of craftsmen. There was a lack of tools - they made it on their own. In the winter cold, ink froze in the inkwells

- they got the hang of attaching vials in the bosom. It was more difficult in cold workshops - hands stuck to iron, legs became stiff. They warmed up at breaks with a gambling leapfrog or a "bunch-small".

And most importantly, don't be discouraged. All difficulties and hardships were overcome together with us by our mentors - the head of the school Nikolai Mikhailovich Afanasyev and Andrey Vasilyevich Zakharov, who replaced him, teachers and masters Pavel Alexandrovich Rusanov, Mikhail Alexandrovich Lebedev, Sergey Vasilyevich Singalov

and others. Our idol was the master who taught us locksmithing, Makar Andreevich Kananin. A man outwardly severe, even dry, he took our concerns to heart, lived by our interests, deeply understood us. Often he was the initiator and indispensable participant in many activities that not only gave the school a livelihood, but also united us, taught us thrift and responsibility. The main thing that served as the basis of the master's authority among the students, and even in the teaching staff, was his disinterestedness, dedication, some kind of crystal-clear honesty in words and deeds. He treated us, students, as equals, did not make allowances for age, demanded integrity in conflict situations, was irreconcilable to any manifestations of laziness, laxity, dishonesty.

"You are workers," he said. "So who will do the work for you, if not you yourself?"

Makar Andreevich himself graduated from our vocational school during the years of the first Russian revolution. Then it was called a real school. He participated in the revolutionary speeches of his students, learned the taste of the Cossack whip and forever became a convinced, implacable enemy of tsarism and, as he himself said, "in general, the exploiters." He had to work for many

enterprises, for some time even in St. Petersburg. And in 1923 he returned to Makariev, began working in his native vocational school as a locksmith. Makar Andreevich knew

his specialty perfectly, he handled metal in such a way that it caused real delight in us, future locksmiths. We learned a lot from our master, but the main thing, perhaps, is the ability to do everything conscientiously. In general, the time of studying at a vocational school was a

time of many discoveries for me. And it is not only about general educational or professional knowledge. I discovered, so to speak, myself. It turned out, for example, that I myself, with my own hands, can work both a stool and a wrench, and even a more complicated product. I remember how one day Makar Andreevich, meticulously measuring with a caliper a part I made myself according to the drawing, said approvingly: - And you, Dmitry, can make a good locksmith ... In the mouth of a master who is usually stingy with praise, these words meant a lot. I,

I think he blushed with embarrassment.

- The main thing is what? - Continuing to look at the detail with a narrowed eye, the master said. "The main thing is that I didn't quit my job. But it didn't work right away, did it?"

- It did not work ... -

That's it. In our business, character must be maintained. No job without character you really don't. So well done!

He gave me the part, which had become warm from his hands, and I looked at it completely in a different way and felt happy because he still managed to do it.

I discovered for myself in people new, sometimes unexpected facets and traits of their characters. In 1923, our Komsomol organization decided to create a kind of chronicle of the school. Engaged in school archives. It was then that several secret cases of the tsarist secret police, brought against unreliable teachers and students, were discovered. Among those whom the Okhrana established covert surveillance were some of our mentors, including Ivan Mikhailovich Moiseev. Behind him were many "deeds" directed against the tsarist regime, sometimes requiring, as we understood, extraordinary courage, firmness and courage. And we considered our Ivan Mikhailovich to be quiet! Remembering the vocational school, I clearly saw our school wall newspaper - with catchy

cartoons, simple short articles. They talked about the good initiatives of students, their achievements, sharply criticized shortcomings. Although the newspaper was small, it also educated. At her call, we rolled up our sleeves and equipped mechanical workshops, repaired the power plant, set up a mill, eliminated accidents on the water supply, and restored steamships. Volunteers were often called in to do some work. Somehow, back in the first year of my schooling, quite late in the fall, it was necessary to transport firewood from the opposite bank of the Unzha. Until the early

1930s, wood was rafted along it. Moreover, they rafted with rafts or geese, belyans, soyms - strong structures, albeit assembled without a single nail. Up to 10 thousand cubic meters of wood was one such structure! And the rafters carried him along the Unzha, without losing a single log. And from the 30s, and especially in wartime, they began to float the mole wood along the river. Unzha gradually clogged up, silted up, swamped, and became unnavigable. The same sad fate befell many of our raftable rivers. We, the masters of our country, should not treat its wealth so carelessly. Native nature is our common heritage, and everyone should take care of it. Before my eyes - that old Unzha and the two of us with fellow student Sasha Shabarov in the boat - volunteers for the transportation of firewood. Made several flights. And when there was a little more firewood left, as it seemed to me, than we usually loaded into the boat, I offered to take everything in order to quickly manage. Sasha hesitated: - How not to roll over. Where there! "It takes a lot of water," I say, "to turn such a boat over. Let's get there! We swam. I am at the oars, Sasha is at the stern. Already at the very bridges, when turning around, they scooped up

side of the water, so much so that the boat capsized. It's nothing for me, I'm familiar with the water, one might say, from birth, it happened to swim across the Volga, and I swam in the hole more than once, but I was scared for Sasha. He knew how to swim, I taught him myself. But here, swimming is not quite ordinary. So he was confused, thrashing on the water with his hands, and he himself would

go headlong into the depths. - Sasha! I shout to him. -

Do not be afraid! Swim to the bridges! I see that he seems to have stopped floundering, swam a little, grabbed the footbridge. Now you can catch firewood. It's good that the current in this place is calm, and a backwater forms at the bridges. So part of the logs was nailed to them. Sasha climbed out and began to drag them onto the bridge with a hook. I dragged the boat to the shore, and then took up

the logs. Every single one was caught. When the manager became aware of the incident, he, of course, scolded us. But for the fact that we still delivered the firewood safe and sound, he praised. The case became a lesson for me: the risk is justified only when it is necessary, when the desired

result cannot be achieved without it. The winter that followed was unusually severe. But she was remembered not by severe frosts, not by icy winds. Lenin died that winter... When this became known in Makariev, we all - both teachers and students - gathered at the school. The grief was overwhelming. Nobody hid their tears. The cold seemed to shackle the hearts. In a few days of mourning, we have matured a lot ...

This year our Komsomol became Leninsky. I always read with excitement the words of the Manifesto, with which the 6th Congress of the RLKSM addressed all Komsomol members, all worker and peasant youth. "Not for a red word," the Manifesto says, "not out of a desire to bear the best of all names, not only to honor the memory of the great deceased, we made this decision. No, we adopted it so that all the working youth of all the peoples inhabiting the USSR, together with their vanguard - the Communist Youth Union - would be imbued with a single will and firm determination to learn how to live, work and fight like Lenin, to fulfill the precepts left to us by LENIN".

It was an oath. The oath of every Komsomol member. And we tried to be faithful to her in all your deeds and actions.

Within a few months after the mournful January, our Komsomol organization was replenished with many new members. Yes, and all her work acquired some kind of special militancy, even greater purposefulness. It was in the vocational school

that I really got involved in Komsomol work, I felt a taste for it. He diligently carried out the orders of the organization. Studying was easy for me, and with enthusiasm I fulfilled the duties of the head of the group, a member of the academic committee, I greatly valued the trust of my comrades when they elected me secretary of the Komsomol organization of the school. We paid much attention to the

political education of our students. The communists of the school gave us constant help in this work. The party organization showed particular concern for political literacy circles, classes in which were held once a week after work in the workshops. Komsomol members led the classes. One of them, Boris Timofeev, I especially remember. What attracted this simple, cheerful and very modest working guy? I

think, first of all, by the fact that his word never disagreed with his deed. He was and remains a patriot of our vocational school. I happened to get acquainted with a photocopy of an interesting document - congratulations, which Lieutenant Colonel Boris Pavlovich Timofeev sent to Makaryev on the days of the school's half-century anniversary. He wrote that the vocational school gave the country a lot of trained, qualified specialists who made a worthy contribution to the creation and development of heavy industry, which is the basis of the power of the Motherland.

I happened to meet Boris Pavlovich after the Great Patriotic War, which he went through from the first to the last day. We were both delighted to meet. We talked, remembered the Timofeevs' house, where we often visited. Boris's father, Pavel Vasilyevich, a teacher, was a man of high culture, possessed deep and versatile knowledge. We loved listening to his leisurely stories. Often he became the arbiter in our endless disputes.

Boris' elder brother, Nikolai, also had a great influence on us. One of the first Makaryev Komsomol members, he was a born propagandist and agitator. How well he mastered the word, how skillfully he knew how to convince! Behind him was a secretary in the committee of the Komsomol, work as the head of agitprop in the committee of the party, study, albeit not completed due to illness, at the Leningrad Polytechnic Institute. Nikolai Pavlovich Timofeev worked as the editor of the county newspaper Krestyansky Krai. We, Komsomol members, knew him well and loved him. The hospitable house of the Timofeevs is still connected in my memory with the unusually delicious pies baked by

Boris's mother Alexandra Alexandrovna. It seems to me that nowhere else and never have I eaten such fragrant and tasty pies as the Timofeevs in Makariev ... We had a lot of business in the Komsomol organization. And all urgent, all important, all necessary. The Party organization entrusted us with responsible tasks and strictly asked

for what was entrusted to us. Comrades more than once elected me as a delegate to district and provincial Komsomol conferences. At one of them, I was elected a member of the Makarievsky Ukom of the Komsomol. Ukom even raised the question of my transfer to work in his apparatus. But I wanted to finish my studies, and, by the way, I petitioned the university

and school council.

Young people, but having considerable experience in labor and organizational activities, worked in the ukom. Nikolai Yakovlev was the secretary of the ukom. He knew the area like the back of his hand. He did not like to stay in the office, he preferred to communicate more closely, as he said, with the Komsomol members. - Papers, Dmitry, of course, are

needed, - he once told me in a break between meetings. And they also need order. But they should not obscure life. And its core is there, in organizations, at a factory, at a machine tool, in a field. Basically, where people...

I well remember another worker of the Ukom, Mikhail Dvornikov, chairman of the Bureau of Young Pioneers. Ideas, suggestions, ideas poured out of him like from a cornucopia, he was always rushing somewhere, late somewhere, going to do a thousand things. And a lot, despite the apparent lack of assembly, managed. Generally speaking, the Komsomol position he held was very suitable for him. He loved children selflessly. And this love was mutual.

Mikhail captivated many of us, Komsomol members of the vocational school, with his love for working with children, with pioneers. We enjoyed tinkering with them, holding pioneer gatherings, organizing concerts, and going on hikes. One of these trips stood out to me in particular.

One summer day I took a group of pioneers to the Petrovsky estate, a picturesque place near the old town of Unzha. We ran enough, played enough, and in the afternoon went home. The guys sang songs, laughed, joked, only Verochka Kuznetsova was sad. I tried to entertain her, asked what was wrong with her, but she only bit her lips and said nothing. But now, apparently, she became very ill, and, bursting into tears, she barely said that she could not go. The children were frightened. I wasn't scared out of my mind either. Taking Verochka in my arms, I almost ran towards the road. He carried the girl in his arms for several kilometers, until finally we met a cart. Having laid the girl on her, I was not immediately able to unbend my arms, they seemed to cramp. Verochka was taken to the hospital on time. She had acute appendicitis. The operation went well. We considered participation in the work to eliminate illiteracy to be a Komsomol assignment of particular importance. Ukom entrusted me to conduct classes with watermen. The people are

seasoned, don't put your finger in his mouth. On the eve of my first lesson, I was pretty nervous. I prepared for it as if I were going to take a difficult exam. However, the guides greeted me kindly. It turned out that there was no need to look for any special approaches to them. The main thing is to treat the matter with a soul and kindly share with people everything that you have and know yourself, and they will definitely reciprocate ... We regularly practiced for 2 hours twice a week after a working day. Usually about fifty people came to classes - mostly elderly people, but there were also young people. And they all worked with pleasure and interest. I think that the success of my first "teaching" experience

was largely facilitated by the fact that one of the masters of industrial training at the vocational school, Vasily Vasilyevich Katanov, was a waterman in the past, he sailed as a mechanic on the Sevastopol steamer. I learned a lot from him, and most importantly, through the experience of communicating with him, I learned some important professional features of water transport workers, which helped to quickly establish contact with them.

I cannot express how glad I was to meet my mentors when, after the war, on the anniversary of our native vocational school, Vasily Vasilyevich Katanov, Makar Andreevich Kananin, and Sergei Alexandrovich Fedorov visited me in Moscow.

These people, like everyone with whom I had the good fortune to study, with whom I had to work side by side, just communicate, gave me, I repeat, a lot. And not so much in terms of professional excellence, although this is very important, but from the point of view of the science of human relations, the assimilation of the original, enduring values of life - loyalty to duty, the chosen cause, the ability to understand people, respond to their needs and requests, devotion to camaraderie and friendship .

These values were not abstract for me and for my peers. They manifested themselves in the daily activities of specific people, primarily communists, and became guidelines for us, according to which we built our own lives.

I recall my Komsomol years with great warmth. It was a wonderful time of youth - a time of searching and daring, hopes and discoveries, a time of awakening of feelings. Of course, every young generation has it. But still, this time is special for us, because we matured together with the Soviet country. They were hungry and cold. But we were not enthusiastic. We wanted to quickly build a new life. And the Komsomol led us to its core, gave us the indomitable energy of a cohesive collective will and collective action. It was an excellent crucible in which a generation of Soviet people passed through the political and moral hardening, already in adulthood they met the Great Patriotic War, bore its weight on their shoulders, forged the weapon of victory and defeated the enemy.

For all this I, like millions of my peers, am grateful to the Komsomol with all my heart.

Among the many qualities that the Komsomol brought up in us, I want to emphasize one thing - high vitality. We had neither time nor place for boredom, despondency, doing nothing. Along with studies, Komsomol work, we went in for sports with enthusiasm. Work was carried out on a large

scale in the circles of Osoaviakhim. We took it seriously and responsibly. Which of the Komsomol members did not see himself as a reliable and skillful defender of the Fatherland? And to become one, it was necessary to master military knowledge and skills, to help strengthen the army and navy. I had to deal with Osoaviakhimov's questions especially a lot: the comrades elected me to the county council of this voluntary society. So, filled with study and social work, four years of study imperceptibly

rushed by. The spring of 1926 came. It is memorable for me not only by the completion of my studies at a vocational school. This spring I became a candidate member of the CPSU(b). Together with me, the party organization of the vocational school accepted Boris Nikitin as a candidate - my good school friend, with whom we were friends all four years of study.

With trepidation, we awaited a call to the Supreme Command of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, where it was to be finally decided the question of admission to

the party. I think the reader is interested to know how the reception went then, so I will give message from one of the June issues of the local newspaper for 1926.

"On June 5, 1926, applications for admission to the party from the following comrades:

1. Okhlopkov Ivan Gavrilovich - a peasant of the village. Sosnovka, Makaryevskaya volost. 2. Pogodin Sergey Alekseevich - a peasant from. Slovenki... ..9. Nikitin Boris Petrovich - a student of a vocational school. 10. Ustinov Dmitry Fedorovich - a student of a vocational school. 11. Starkin Aleksey Yakovlevich - an employee of the Makarievskaya postal and tele offices.

We ask persons and institutions who know of any misdeeds by the comrades mentioned that prevent them from joining the Party to inform them within a week from the date of publication.

Accounting department of the ukom of the CPSU (b).

I reread the newspaper, yellowed from time to time, and again, as almost six decades ago, I was worried. This can be understood. Joining a party is an absolutely exceptional event in a person's biography, marking his second, spiritual birth.

There were no offenses preventing us from joining the Party. Sunny - that's how I remember him for the rest of my life - on a June afternoon I accepted a candidate card from the hands of the secretary of the ukom of the CPSU (b). From that day until now, I check all my deeds, deeds, thoughts with the main criterion in life - my belonging to the Leninist Communist Party.

I had a chance to pass my PhD experience at the construction of a pulp and paper mill near Balakhna. At that time,

our entire country was a grandiose construction site. Many industries had to be created anew: mechanical engineering, machine tool building, the automotive, chemical, tractor, defense industries, the development of ferrous metallurgy, and the reconstruction of old enterprises. A little more than six months have passed since the XIV Party Congress - the Congress of Industrialization - and the corps of future industrial and energy giants, such as Dneproges, the Kharkov Tractor Plant, agricultural engineering plants in Rostov-on-Don and Zaporozhye, and many others, rose everywhere.

Among the new buildings was the largest pulp and paper mill at that time near Balakhna. The future enterprise, at the request of its builders, was named after F.E. Dzerzhinsky. We had heard a lot about construction

when we were studying at a vocational school, we knew that the country really needed the factory. After all, the Soviet Union was forced to import paper from abroad, to pay for it in gold almost 15 million rubles annually.

We, graduates of the vocational school, really wanted to get to the construction site. Having barely passed the exams and received certificates of qualified specialists, we went to Balakhna. At the Party Construction

Committee, where immediately upon arrival Boris Nikitin and I came to register, we were greeted with satisfaction. "We need workers, especially

people like you," said the secretary. There are many difficult areas at the construction site. But now the hottest place is the machine shop. The work of other construction sites depends on it. So, guys, let's agree with the personnel officers and throw you on a breakthrough. How do you not let me down? - We won't let you

down! We answered with one voice. We were appointed assistant locksmiths at the turning and locksmith section of the machine shop. There was a lot of work, work, as a rule,

interesting, requiring not only physical exertion, but also ingenuity. Versatile knowledge and skills acquired in the vocational school came in handy. From the very first days, we began not only to fulfill, but also to exceed the norms, and made a number of rationalization proposals. Among other advanced workers, we were entrusted with the installation of the first paper machine. At first, we lived in Balakhna, in a house on Karl Liebknecht Street, in the

apartment of Nagorov, our Makaryev comrade. But getting to work from here was far away - almost six kilometers. With difficulty, we managed to find housing closer, in Kubantsevo, which was located in the middle between Balakhna and the village of Kurza - the current Pravdinsky, the village of the pulp and paper giant.

The hut in which we lodged with several comrades stood on the banks of the Volga. It was cramped in it, so in the summer and autumn I lived in the hayloft. It was so pleasant after a hard day to breathe in the sweet smell of fragrant herbs, to feel its elastic, springy bed. Early in the morning, the first rays of the sun peered through the small dormer window, the silence was filled with the many-voiced chirping of birds. You jump from the hayloft, push the guys to the Volga. Until you run to it, it will cool your feet with dew, wash it. Undress on the run - and into the water. You will take a breath and go to measure the river with saplings. You get out of the water and feel as if the Volga has poured such strength and vigor into you that you can move mountains ... As young communists, Boris and I actively participated in the life of the party organization. There were not so many communists at the

construction site, where almost four and a half thousand people worked - just over a hundred. The composition of the builders was rather motley, two-thirds were seasonal workers. And the moods among them were different, especially since there were enough difficulties with housing, food, and industrial troubles. Enemies tried to play on these difficulties. Therefore, to uphold the line of the Party, to explain it to the people, to stop attempts to distort and defame Party decisions, to divide the workers, to undermine discipline—all this had to be done every

day. The situation itself demanded the utmost composure, vigilance, a clear definite position in various production and even everyday situations, did not allow you to forget for a second that you were a communist. A class struggle was going on, and the Party was counting on us as its fighters.

The young reader knows what the class struggle is mainly from textbooks and fiction. In our society, this term has long been applied exclusively to the foreign policy field. But my and my peers' emergence into independent life coincided with the intensification of the class struggle both in the international arena and within the country.

In 1927, when I started working at a construction site, the USSR's international position became more complicated due to the British government breaking off diplomatic and trade relations with the USSR. Every day the newspapers carried reports of the attempts of the imperialists to frustrate or slow down the economic development of the Soviet Union. Denials of loans, a policy of economic isolation, threats of new armed intervention were combined with anti-Soviet provocations. I remember how indignant we were caused by the raids on Soviet missions and institutions in Peking and London, and the assassination in Warsaw of our country's plenipotentiary, Voikov.

The imperialists supported and inspired in every possible way the subversive activities of the remnants of the White Guards and other counter-revolutionary elements inside the Soviet country. Anger and indignation were caused by the crime of English saboteurs, who in 1927 threw bombs at a party club in Leningrad, injuring about 30 people. The spearhead of all enemy provocations was aimed at preventing the industrialization of the USSR at any cost. Our class enemies understood that it was industrialization that would speed up the building of socialism, strengthen the independence of the USSR and strengthen its defense capability.

The aggravation of the class struggle in the international arena and within the country was reflected in

within the party. In the early years of industrialization, the Trotskyites and Zinovievists, who united on an anti-Leninist platform, became the main danger in the party. At the call of the Central Committee, all party organizations, all class-conscious workers, joined in an active struggle against the "new opposition". By the time Boris Nikitin and I joined the party organization for the construction of a pulp and paper mill, this struggle was already coming to an end. However, we also had to participate in it.

I well remember discussion meetings in our Party organization. They were hot and passionate. Comrades from the party archive of the Gorky Regional Committee of the CPSU sent me, among other documents of that period, a copy of the minutes of one of these meetings, which took place in October 1927. I read this document with excitement - evidence of the political maturity of the construction communists. I will give only a small excerpt from the resolution of our meeting: "The team of the CPSU (b) of the construction of the Central Bank of Russia, sharply condemning the incessant splitting line of the lied and decomposed leaders of the opposition, insists on decisive measures against the opposition from the Central Committee and the upcoming XV Party Congress, up to and including exclusion from the ranks party, if further activity continues, leading to a split in the unity of the CPSU (b)"².

The same in spirit and content were the resolutions of the discussion meetings of the overwhelming majority of the party organizations of the CPSU(b). 724,000 members of the party voted for the policy of the Central Committee, while only 4,000 voted for the bloc of Trotskyists and Zinovievites, which

was less than one percent. The bankruptcy of the Trotskyist-Zinoviev opposition was complete. The

Leninist policy of the party has won. Direct participation in the struggle for this victory became for me a school of principle, firmness in carrying out the line of the party, uncompromising attitude towards its enemies. By November 1927, when the candidate's experience was over and I was accepted as a member of the CPSU (b), I already fully felt my involvement in the great cause of the party - the cause of building a new society, my personal responsibility for the purity of its ranks, for the honor of the high rank of a communist.

Choice

The construction site near Balakhna was, in fact, the first experience of my independent work in production, participation in the life of a large labor collective, in the activities of a large party organization. Then I happened to live, work and study in Ivanovo-Voznesensk. The biography of this city and the entire region is rich in revolutionary and labor affairs. Here, back in 1905, the first Soviet of Workers' Deputies in Russia was created. Both after the February Revolution and in the days of October, the Ivanovo workers formed part of the revolutionary vanguard of the Russian proletariat. They were among the first in the Soviet Republic to organize combat detachments to defend the gains of October from foreign military intervention and the White Guards. In April 1920, V.I. gave a high assessment of their actions. Lenin. "The Ivanovo-Voznesensk, St. Petersburg and Moscow workers," he said, "suffered in these two years as much as no one else had ever endured in the struggle on the red fronts."³ In Ivanovo-Voznesensk, active revolutionary activities were carried out by F.A. Afanasiev, A.S. Bubnov, S.I. Balashov, P.P. Postyshev, M.V. Frunze, other Bolshevik-Leninists.

I went to work at one of the oldest enterprises in the city - a textile factory, which bore the name of the worker Fyodor Zinoviev. Fedor - party nickname

² Party archive of the Gorky Regional Committee of the CPSU. F. 82. On. 1. D. 439. L. 26.

³ *Lenin V.I.* Poly. coll. op. T. 40. S. 296.

Georgy Stepanovich Zinoviev. Even in pre-October times, he was an active organizer of revolutionary May Day meetings and died at the hands of the tsarist

executioners. When I arrived at the factory, reconstruction was in full swing. In 1928 alone, more than 400 new machines were installed here. I was first accepted as a mechanic in the mechanical department, and then appointed as a diesel engine driver. I remember my work at the factory in a militant way with a clear organization, strong discipline, an atmosphere of friendship and solidarity of the work collective, which zealously guarded the glorious revolutionary traditions. Moreover, perhaps, the fact that I lived here according to an even tighter schedule: in addition to the main work and the fulfillment of party and public duties, I had to work hard and hard. The fact is that I had a great desire to learn and I set myself the task of preparing for entering the institute at all costs. It was necessary to restore and replenish knowledge. During the day he worked, so there were practically only evenings left for study, weekends and holidays were often taken.

I had to do a lot of party and social work. The communists of the factory elected me to the party bureau, instructed me to carry out agitation and propaganda work. In addition, at the district Komsomol conference I was elected to the district committee of the Komsomol, and at the plenum of the district committee - to its bureau. And since I was used to carrying out any assignment, any business to the conscience, I had to distribute the time literally by the minute. Everyday

social work disciplined, demanded special composure, the ability to deal with a full load. And of course, she taught sensitivity and attentiveness to people, respect for the opinion and experience of the team.

I had a special responsibility for agitation and propaganda work. After the Fifteenth Party Congress, which adopted directives on the drawing up of the first five-year plan for the development of the national economy, preparations began for the offensive of socialism along all fronts. This provoked stubborn resistance from the capitalist elements within the country. And then, at the end of the 20s, there were not so few of them - more than 4.5 percent of the population. Approximately a quarter of retail trade and a sixth of industrial output were in the hands of Nepmen. The fifth part of marketable grain fell on kulaks.

In the NEPman and the kulak, international reaction saw its support in the struggle to disrupt socialist construction in the USSR. Hostile propaganda capitalized on the difficulties with bread. We have mobilized all available party forces, all communists and Komsomol members for talks with people, for conducting high-profile readings of newspapers in brigades, at the stations and in the shops. We tried to link these conversations more closely with the specific affairs and tasks of the factory. Even then, we managed to achieve that the question at the factory was posed as follows: if an employee did not fulfill the plan, did not take care of the quality of the products, did not stop mismanagement, wastefulness in time, then he had a problem with discipline. Our motto was to work with integrity. And we tried to make this motto for everyone become not only a word, but a concrete deed.

At one time, marriage began to appear in the production of chintz. By decision of the party cell, we immediately began to find out the reasons for the marriage. And when they became clear, they consulted with innovators and raised the issue of eliminating these causes before the whole team. There have been many different proposals. This was convincing evidence of the enormous interest of the workers in the success of the common cause. Finally, the best offer was chosen and implemented.

There was no marriage. Another case comes to mind. Somehow one of our two diesel engines had an accident. They began to understand. It turns out that the assistant mechanic, his name, as I recall, Semyon Lysenin, noticed a malfunction in the transmission and, in order to prevent a breakdown, gave the command to turn off the diesel without warning the driver. He was a good worker, diligent and diligent, besides a party member. So he was guided by the best of intentions. But he did not have enough knowledge and experience, his actions were

wrong, as a result, the pulley failed, the machines in the shops stopped.

After liquidating the accident, they convened an open general meeting of the party cell. Lysenin, of course, got it hard. But no less sharp criticism was directed at those who were ex officio responsible for the reliable operation of machines and mechanisms, for the training of people serving them. The meeting decided to thoroughly check all the equipment of the factory. According

to this decision, the state of affairs with the training of personnel, the quality of maintenance of equipment, and the order in the workplace were carefully studied. The management was acquainted with the assessments and conclusions, measures were outlined to eliminate the shortcomings, and the communists and all the workers were mobilized to eliminate them. The party cell took control of the quality of technical education and the

exchange of advanced experience in working with technology. We acutely felt the shortage of qualified technical specialists - engineers and technicians who would not only have high professional training, but would also have common interests with the working class, who would be their own. This was the most important all-party, all-state task. Solving it, the party expanded the network of higher technical educational institutions and technical schools, sent to study communists with experience in party, Soviet, trade union and production activities. On September 1, 1928, along with other Ivanovo communist workers, I began to study at preparatory courses at the Ivanovo-Voznesensky Provincial Committee of the All-Union Communist

Party of Bolsheviks. Everything that happened at the factory, at the courses, in general in Ivanovo-Voznesensk, reflected the processes characteristic of the country as a whole, which was entering 1929, the year of a radical change in socialist construction. What did this fracture mean? In industry - the acceleration of the pace of socialist industrialization. In agriculture - the turn of the bulk of the peasantry to the path of collective farms. Thoughts, feelings, moods of the working masses - both party and non-party - were reflected in Lenin's article "How to organize competition?", Written by Ilyich in 1917, and in 1929 first published in Pravda. This article determined the main direction of our work.

And when, in April 1929, the 16th Party Conference adopted the first five-year plan for the development of the country's national economy, it was met with a firm working word: "Five-year plan - in four years!" And, as you know, the workers kept their word.

In the autumn of 1929 I became a student at the Ivanovo-Voznesensk Polytechnic Institute. The student time for everyone who studied at the university is very special. This is the time when a person, having made a choice of his life goal, his future path, prepares to follow the chosen path. Preparing means, as they say, working "for reception", in order to subsequently ensure maximum return. His mind, his heart, his soul are open to knowledge, impressions, feelings and eagerly absorb them. In a word, a person acquires baggage with which he can move on in a new capacity. Intense inner work is going on, a personality is being created. Great time...

I studied at the Faculty of Mechanics, in the group for the training of process engineers for cold working of metals. The group gathered mostly the same as me, workers. The party stratum was significant, which determined the most serious attitude of the group to study. Of course, most of us had a lack of systematic general education, significant breaks in our studies. All this had to be compensated for by perseverance, composure, purposefulness.

The teachers did not give us any discounts, and we ourselves did not give ourselves any concessions. Everyone understood that at such a difficult time, when the country needs skilled workers, we were given the opportunity to study, which means that we should study for real.

Ivanovo-Voznesensky Polytechnic Institute was established in 1918 on the initiative of M.V. Frunze, at that time the chairman of the provincial executive committee, on the basis of the Polytechnic Institute evacuated during the First World War from Riga and over the first 10 years of its existence, trained 382 specialists with higher education. By

By modern standards, this figure seems insignificant, but it was a huge achievement for the young republic. Its significance is all the more great because in the most difficult post-October years a solid basis was prepared in Ivanovo-Voznesensk for expanding the institute and increasing the number of specialists it graduates. By the time I entered, there were already about 1,500 students studying here, and the annual graduation reached a figure equal to the total number of graduates for the entire previous decade. The Institute trained agronomists, chemists, builders, mechanics, economists, textile workers and other specialists for the national economy of the country.

Of course, we were proud to study at such an institute. Its base, despite the lack of premises and equipment, made it possible to make the educational process interesting and fruitful. For example, the mechanical department where I studied had laboratories for physics, thermal engines, steam boilers, water and fuel, electrical engineering, materials testing, mechanical workshops, cabinets for machine parts and applied mechanics, and engineering drawing that were not bad at that time. In them, along with the consolidation of theoretical knowledge, students acquired the skills of experimenting, creating and operating equipment, processing materials and other work.

Many teachers have worked at the institute since the first days of its existence. The department of thermal engines was headed by the oldest professor of the institute V.V. Sushkov. He lectured in the course of thermodynamics and the theory of engines. He was not only a theoretical scientist, but also a major practitioner, an experienced mechanical engineer. Therefore, his lectures contained many valuable applied recommendations. I confess that I was very glad when I learned that later, already in 1946, Sushkov was awarded the degree of Doctor of Technical Sciences for his great scientific and practical activity without defending a dissertation. His textbooks "Technical Thermodynamics", "Internal Combustion Engines" and others were reprinted more than once and enjoyed great popularity in our country and abroad. Associate Professor N.A. knew and taught his subject

very well. Vlasov. He taught theoretical and applied mechanics. The pupils of the institute owed him a deep knowledge of the theory of machines and mechanisms in many respects. A large amount of practical work was carried out in the course of descriptive geometry, which was taught by Associate Professor D.A. Breeders. We performed 12–14 sheets of only credit graphic works. It is no coincidence that I called these works credits. The delivery of the drawing to the teacher each time turned, in essence, into an exam, in which the knowledge of theoretical provisions and the practical execution of the task were scrupulously checked. This required from us a serious, responsible attitude to business, a lot of independent work, the volume of which increased also because then there were no textbooks for this course, on the regulation of drawings in mechanical engineering. Good drawing skills, the Ivanovo "school" of descriptive geometry were very useful to me in my further studies, and later in my practical work. It is known that the first year of study at a university is especially difficult for students. It requires a radical restructuring of the rhythm of life, many inclinations and

habits. At first it seemed strange to us: lectures are given, but no one asks how it is understood, how it is learned, how the "lesson" is learned. But soon seminars, laboratory work, practical classes in the workshops began. And it turned out that the material of the lecture is not just theory, it is directly related to practice and it needs to be mastered for real.

In our student life, the lion's share of the time, of course, was occupied by academic affairs. But we were young people, full of strength and energy, so we were not content with studying alone. The party and Komsomol organizations of the institute were actively working. By the way, the communists elected me a member of the institute's party bureau, and the Komsomol members elected me their executive secretary. In the party bureau, I was instructed to head the cultural commission, apparently taking into account my Balakhna experience. Probably not the last role was played by the fact that I myself have always loved a good song, a dashing dance, a good joke.

It was a lot of fun at the institute evenings of rest. As a rule, small theatrical performances, sketches from student life, and amateur art concerts were prepared for them. We also had our own soloists, singers and dancers, readers and magicians. Not a single concert could do without the "power" acrobatic numbers, which enjoyed constant success, especially since there were enough strong guys. The students loved dancing. They danced to a combined orchestra, a significant part of which was "noise" instruments, including combs wrapped in tissue paper, but more often to an accordion. It was on one of these evenings that I met my future wife, Taya

Brykalova. She was originally from Shuya, and studied at the chemical faculty of our institute. Taisiya Alekseevna has been a faithful comrade and friend to me for many years. Hand in hand with her, we went through many trials, shared grief and joy, raised and educated our children ... Classes were in full swing, and our institute continued to be transformed as part of the measures taken by

the party to expand the network of higher technical educational institutions in the country. As a rule, they were deployed on the basis of faculties of existing technical universities. In order to ensure the normal functioning of the newly created institutes and the systematic release of specialists by them, students were recruited for several courses at once, and the existing student contingents were redistributed among the technical colleges. On the basis of the Ivanovo-Voznesensky Polytechnic Institute, four new technical colleges were deployed, and our

group was sent in full strength to Moscow, to the Mechanical Engineering Institute. Subsequently, it was transformed into the Moscow Higher Technical School named after N.E. Bauman. He is rightly called the elder of the country's technical universities. It has existed since 1830, first as a real school for the training of "skilled craftsmen with theoretical information that serves to improve crafts and factory work," and then from the middle of the last century - as a higher technical educational institution. Such outstanding scientists as N.E. Zhukovsky, S.L. Chaplygin, B.N. Yuriev, V.P. Vetchinkin, P.P. Lazarev, P.L. Chebyshev, D.N. Lebedev, K.A. Krug, B.I. Ugrimov, S.I. Vavilov and many others. Such a cohort of scientists working within the walls of one university could be proud of another state ...

Many graduates of this educational institution became major figures in the Soviet state, outstanding organizers of production. I have had the pleasure of working with some of them. This is V.A. Malyshev, V.E. Dymshits, B.L. Vannikov, P.N. Goremykin, A.I. Shokin, S.A. Afanasiev, S.P. Korolev, A.N. Tupolev, B.S. Stechkin, V.Ya. Klimov, V.P. Barmin ... But that was many years later, and then we, who arrived in Moscow from Ivanovo-Voznesensk, were settled in a hostel, and we again began to study. Of course, in the evenings and on weekends we tried to get to know the capital. I was here for the first time, and I must say, Moscow made a huge impression on me, and on my comrades. A visit to the Bolshoi Theater was a real event for us. We listened to the opera "Sadko". Many melodies stayed in my memory for a long time, but I simply fell in love with Sadko's aria and often performed it with pleasure in a circle of friends. One day we got up long before dawn and

rushed to the Alexander Garden to get in line at the Mausoleum. So I saw Lenin for the first time... Coming out of the Mausoleum, we were silent for a long time. I didn't want to speak. The mournful days of January 1924 came to life in my memory. Each of us seemed to listen to something very important within ourselves. Like V. Mayakovsky: "I clean myself under Lenin in order to swim further into the revolution ..." We did not stay in

Moscow for long. Two months later, our group was sent to Leningrad. Before leaving the capital, we took a photo for memory. In the picture, we are captured as we were at the very beginning of the chosen path ... In the city on the Neva,

we were assigned first to the machine-building, and then, in March 1932, finally, to the Leningrad Military Mechanical Institute (LVMI).

The orientation of the training of our group most fully corresponded to the profile of this particular institute. I graduated from it in 1934.

With unfailing warmth I remember my native LVMI, fellow students, professors and teachers. At the

military-mechanical institute, not everything went well at first. There were not enough rooms for lecturing, for laboratories, textbooks and teaching aids. Could we put up with it? The party organization took up the problem of teaching materials. They mobilized teachers and students for the production of diagrams, tables, posters, especially in special disciplines. These visual aids were used not only in the classroom, but were also hung in classrooms, in the corridors of the institute, laboratories and offices, so that everyone could use them at any time. This largely made up for the lack of textbooks and equipment. We were in great need of publishing, or at least duplicating on a typewriter,

the main lectures of professors, associate professors, and teachers. I remember I had to ask Professor A.L. Baboshin to publish his lectures. An old specialist, scientist-researcher, he taught his subject in an interesting and exciting way. The professor did not agree for a long time to process his lectures for publication: there is no time, then there is no good paper. But we did not retreat, and finally his lectures were published. The benefit was used not only by us, but, as far as I know, by subsequent generations of LVMI students.

The main method of teaching at the Institute was the laboratory team. Its essence was that lectures were given to students, and then individual and brigade (for a certain group of several people) assignments were given. These tasks were carried out in self-study and in laboratories. The study of the topic was completed with a conversation of the head teacher, during which one or two reports of students were heard, information about the latest in science and technology, and the necessary recommendations were given.

At first, it was quite clearly felt that the institute was in its infancy. Disputes often arose among students: does a future engineer need this or that subject, what does this or that knowledge give him? At lectures, in wall newspapers and the institute's printed edition, the practical significance of the subjects was explained. Without this, perhaps, it would be difficult to achieve a conscious and interested attitude of students towards some of them. The training program was

extensive, and its development required considerable work. Tired, of course. Once, during a class led by Professor N.S. Acherkan, one of the students complained about being too busy, that, they say, there is not enough time. The grey-haired, lean, unusually agile for his more than sixty years old professor slyly narrowed his eyes: - Young man, tell me, how much do you sleep? - In what

sense? "But in the sense of time," Nikolai Semenovich explained to the

general laughter. I must say that the students deeply respected him and loved him very much for his amazing erudition and dedication, for the soulfulness hidden under external pricklyness. - Approximately eight hours, Nikolai Semenovich ... - A lot!

exclaimed the professor. - A lot of! This is an unaffordable luxury. I dare say, I have been sleeping no more than 6 hours a day for a long time. Even on vacation. Here's your spare time. Shall we eat more or do it yourself? - Himself ... We had a lot to do. We hurried to join the

work, hurried to contribute our share in the creation and development of a new, socialist economy. Diligence, diligence, we were not to occupy. But the ability to rationally organize one's work, one's time, to achieve final educational results in the shortest possible way was often lacking. The teachers paid serious attention to this side of the matter. I remember, for example, as the head of the department of political economy V.I. Ryazantsev taught us to plan our work,

in his time, to clearly define what, in the total amount of the issues studied, first of all and how to take it, he clearly explained the "technique and technology" of studying primary sources. This significantly helped us, contributed to the development of discipline, the ability to properly distribute forces and time.

So we comprehended not only the sciences themselves, but also learned to learn. First of all, to study independently, achieving the greatest return on the acquired theoretical baggage. And this science, perhaps, is one of the main ones. After all, every person learns, essentially, all his life, but not everyone knows how to manage his knowledge. Useless knowledge is like cultivated but never sown arable land. It seems to be labor expended, but no use. True wealth is only the knowledge that serves people, the cause of building a new life. This is the truth that I learned during my studies in Leningrad

and which I have always
wanted to be guided in life.

And I would like to share one more thought in this connection. Once, at one of the seminars on philosophy, the teacher told a parable. We liked it very much then, and we liked to repeat it on occasion. Here she is.

A passer-by walks past the construction site. Looks: people roll heavily loaded cars. One - hunched over, barely moving his legs, the other - with the stubbornness of the doomed, the third -

cheerfully with the song. - What are you

doing? he asks. - Don't you see? I'm rolling a
wheelbarrow! one answered angrily. "I earn my daily
bread," sighed another. We are building a
palace! - proudly said the

third. I think the meaning of the parable is clear. A person, in order to feel the fullness of life, to experience happiness, must see the meaning of his work. And if this work is for the benefit of people, the native country, it makes a person strong

and persistent, gives rise to the energy of conscious creativity. Already in our student years, mastering the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism, we tried to connect the acquired knowledge with the reality around us, to apply it to the analysis of problems given out by life, to our own practical activities. Practice is the crucible in which knowledge is melted into beliefs, beliefs into actions.

The connection between theoretical knowledge and practice is formed not immediately, but gradually. And most actively - just at the time when a person chooses his place in life, determines for himself its goal. This is a period of youth, a significant proportion of which for many boys and girls is student years. In the party and Komsomol organizations of our institute, questions of studying the social sciences were seriously raised, especially the primary sources of the works of the classics of Marxism-Leninism, party and state documents. It should be said that in the early 1930s, the term "work through" this or that work, report or work became widespread in relation to the study of social sciences. It is not known by whom and when it was put into circulation. But it was clear that the word "work through" was in no way suitable for mastering the Marxist-Leninist theory, much less for the formation of the Marxist-Leninist worldview among students. We struggled with this approach. After all, in practice it meant formalism. Some people got the knack of trumping by the fact that he, they say,

"worked" such and such a number of books and documents, so what can be the claims to his ideology? It is clear that we could not put up with this. And when the term "work through" was subsequently subjected to sharp party criticism, we met this with great satisfaction. In particular, S.M. Kirov, speaking

at one of the plenums of the Leningrad City Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, said: "... in our school, in relation to social science, there is not even such a term "study", it has been replaced by the term "work through" - Marx, Engels, Lenin. "We," they say, "worked through Marx—

Engels to half and went over to Lenin. This is nothing but a mockery of Marx, and of Engels, and of Lenin.

It's no secret that some of today's young people sometimes get along with education and awareness with political naivety, and professional readiness with an insufficiently responsible attitude to work. This means that not everything is fine in their life position, there is a gap between their word and deed, sometimes significant. Sometimes such a gap can also be seen among production commanders who have university diplomas, workers at various levels of management, and educators. What's the matter here? The reasons seem to be different. But one of them, it seems to me, is that in some universities the quality of teaching social sciences is not high, and the entire process of training and education is poorly linked with the organizational, ideological, economic activities of the party, with the solution of specific practical problems.

During my student years, fundamental importance was attached to the worldview, ideological and educational orientation of lectures, seminars, classes of any subject content. Our Party organization has never stood aloof from these questions. By the way, we had a strong, fighting one - the communists made up two-thirds of the students. The overwhelming majority of them were workers. Along with everyday party and Komsomol

work, many carried out public assignments, sometimes quite complex and responsible. For example, I was a member of the trade union committee of the institute, where I was responsible for the construction of a student hostel. The trade union committee asked me in full. I often had to visit the construction site. Perhaps already at that time I learned and learned the main causes of construction failures and troubles. The construction was supervised by one of the institute's suppliers. He ran a lot, cursed with everyone. In his hands he carried a huge shabby briefcase stuffed with applications, invoices, plans and drawings. Often he shook these papers, covering up with them the lack of materials, inconsistencies, etc. In fact, the matter was often stalled precisely by the lack of personal organization on the part of the supplier, deftly replaced by "violent" activity, but in essence, inactivity.

I often had to enter into real fights with this unfortunate leader, to resolve many issues on the spot, to "connect" the authority of the trade union committee, the party committee of the institute. It was possible to build a hostel, albeit with a delay, but a little. In general, direct participation in various economic affairs, in the organization of the educational process, in the cultural life of the institute taught me a lot. By the way, about the

cultural life of the Institute. Our student dormitories formed a whole town on the outskirts of Leningrad, in the town of Lesnoye. A branch of the library and a reading room, a hall for spending evenings of rest, and a permanent propaganda center worked here. From here, in the evenings, and more often on weekends, we collectively went to the city. During our studies, we got acquainted with all the historical places associated with the life and work of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. They loved to go to museums, with joy, as soon as they managed to get tickets, they went to performances in theaters. Returning to the hostel, we discussed for a long time what we saw and heard, outlined new plans for the coming weekend. Revolutionary holidays were held cheerfully and amicably. In the center of the demonstration had to get on overloaded trams. They hung on the handrails of the entrance doors, which in those years were not yet closed during movement, on couplings, and sometimes even climbed onto the roof of the car. Well, they often returned on foot, singing songs along the way, including those just heard at the demonstration.

The hostel played a significant role in shaping us as collectivists. Indeed, our joys and sorrows were common. Leaving for practice in other cities, we missed our hostel. The habits that developed there, "at home", persisted during the practice. We went to her, as a rule, in groups, and for residence

we were placed in hotels or hostels, usually all in one room. Gathering together in the evenings, we shared news, discussed the problems that arose, helped each other find solutions. Until late at night, stories "from life" about various cases and incidents sounded in the room. Sometimes there was a "competition" of talents. Someone started the song, the rest picked it up. There were arias from operettas and romances, ditties and comic songs... Practice occupied the most

important place in our professional training. During the three years of study at LVMI, we went through it six times at different factories, in different production teams. By the way, that was the first time I visited Izhevsk, a glorious working-class city. Everything that was gleaned in classrooms, laboratories, institute workshops, here, in the factory shops, was tested. Here we learned to see behind the drawing not only a part or assembly, as they say, in kind, but also how it should be made, with what tool, from what material. Here came to me a true understanding of what the old masters call the "soul of metal" - an understanding without which it is impossible to imagine either the idea, logic and structure of the structure, or the complex and intelligent life of mechanisms and machines. And finally, here, not only with my mind, but also with my heart, I perceived a long time ago, as they say, an elementary truth, which consists in the fact that the basis of any production is not technology, not technology, not raw materials or energy. It is made up of people. Workers and employees, engineers and technicians devote their strength and talent to the cause of strengthening the might of their native country. The very name of the institute -

military-mechanical - indicates that it paid special attention to the military side of the knowledge we received, our military training. From the point of view of the needs of the country's defense, the technical equipment of the army and navy, essentially all of our training as engineers was carried out. We studied in detail the structure of the Soviet Armed Forces, the system of providing them with material and technical means and people, and the organization of training and education of personnel. A lot of time was devoted to mastering tactics, military topography, the basics of fortification, organizing and conducting party political work. We persistently mastered everything connected with the mobilization readiness of industry, the organization and conduct of military production, and the military economy as a whole. We treated the issues of military training with

the highest degree of responsibility. Everyone understood that our activities as specialist engineers would not only be closely connected, but entirely subordinated to strengthening the country's defense. And here no, even the slightest concessions are unacceptable. All the more so since the international situation testified to the far from peaceful intentions of imperialism. Graduates of LVMI have made a significant

contribution to the development of the defense industry, the improvement of weapons. In the prewar years, many of them worked as directors, chief engineers, chief technologists and chief designers of defense plants, as well as in responsible positions in party and state bodies.

In 1939, five years after graduation, at the 18th Party Congress, I met with fellow students at the institute - fellow students or those who completed their studies at LVMI a year or two earlier or later. Who were they? Secretary of the Leningrad City Party Committee A.A. Kuznetsov, director of a large plant N.E. Nosovsky, party organizer of the defense enterprise I.A. Perazic and other comrades. We had something to remember, something to tell each other. There was something to be proud of: LVMI

gave us a ticket to a great life. Completion of studies at the institute is undoubtedly an important milestone in the professional and ideological and moral development of a person. Important, but by no means final. It marks the completion of a special stage in the development of the personality, the stage of creating, one might say, its foundation. But it is followed by other stages, no less important. In general, there is no such period in the conscious life of a person, there is no such age when one could stop, say to oneself: that's it, the goal has been achieved, you can calm down, use the accumulated baggage of knowledge, not worrying about replenishing

hopelessly falling behind, losing contact with your time, depriving yourself of the joy of life. After all, it is movement, movement forward.

Student years introduced me to an inexhaustible treasury of knowledge, helped develop and strengthen the desire to always and everywhere, to use Lenin's words, to act as communism requires. And this, perhaps, is the main thing.

Chapter 2 Manhood

Introduction to creativity

Great ideas give rise to great energy of the masses. The validity of this Marxist truth has been convincingly confirmed by the richest social practice of real socialism, and above all, of course, by the glorious history of the Soviet country. October woke up our talented and hardworking people, as V.I. Lenin, the "untapped spring" of talents. The fact that Soviet science and scientific and technological progress now occupy leading positions in the most important fields of knowledge and practice in socialist construction is an impressive and deeply natural result of the development of a new society in which millions of working people have become active participants in cultural life, creators of spiritual values.

A new, socialist intelligentsia emerged from the stratum of the people. I was lucky to be among its first representatives, brought up by the party already in the conditions of socialism. Together with an

engineering diploma, I received a referral to the newly created Leningrad Artillery Research Marine Institute (DANIMI) as a design engineer. Pavel Petrovich Sheshaev headed DANIMI at that time. The qualities of an old Bolshevik,

who had been hardened in the fire of the October Revolution and the Civil War, were combined in him with organizational skills and deep specialized knowledge. "We have enough difficulties," Pavel Petrovich told me. "And there is no relief. The construction of a large fleet has been launched. New developments of weapons for ships under construction and modernization will be required.

An important task is the implementation of these developments. In a word, a lot of hard work is

required... Many scientific research had, in essence, to start from scratch, to accumulate, systematize, classify materials. A lot of strength and energy was taken away by the organizational side of the matter. It was necessary to establish and consolidate ties with customers, with institutions and enterprises, scientific organizations, create a base and establish experimental work. We also experienced difficulties of a purely domestic nature, primarily related to housing and clothing. There was still a shortage of

industrial goods, a lot was distributed according to coupons. Even in winter, for example, I was forced to wear a cap, an autumn raglan coat and old felt boots. One day, returning home from the training ground, I got off the tram, pulled my cap on, turned up my collar, and walked faster. I hear one felt boot rustling something suspiciously. It turns out that he was completely thin and straw - "insulation" - broke out into the resulting hole. I had to clean up the unsolicited "whisk", and in the evening carry out urgent repairs from improvised materials. And the majority had such shabby shoes and clothes

from U.S.

Difficulties only rallied even more. We worked together, enthusiastically, regardless of the time. And this gave rise to and strengthened mutual respect, trust in each other.

Everyone understood that conscientiousness and maximum return were required from everyone, everyone was ready to help a comrade at any moment. In a word, we did not work separately, but together. Such work cannot be carried out without the unity of fundamental interests and goals.

The situation that prevailed in our collective reflected the general atmosphere in the country, which was solving the problems of expanding the construction of socialism along the entire front, restructuring social relations on new, collectivist principles. This restructuring covered the whole way of life. The main thing was to make the first vital need of the Soviet people work for the benefit of society. It is no secret that the productivity of a person's labor depends to a large extent on the collective of which he is a member and in which the big concepts of politics and economics are translated into a specific language of practice. Friendly, collective work is especially important in the conduct of scientific research. Often they are so complex that one person or even a group of scientists and engineers simply cannot do them. And I consider myself a great success that immediately after the student's bench I got into a healthy, strong team. A significant role in its rallying belonged to the head of the department Pavel Ivanovich Lukyanov, his assistants Sergei Konstantinovich Ryabov and Vasily Evgenievich Zatursky.

I remember Nikolai Alekseevich Sulimovsky with gratitude. A comprehensively trained, thoughtful and proactive engineer, he helped me quickly get used to the department, understand its tasks and concerns, as they say, find myself, my place in the overall work. I also made friends with Viktor Nikolaevich Melnikov, a man of a generous soul, a great connoisseur of military affairs. Prior to institute, he served as a combat unit commander on the October Revolution battleship, knew the naval artillery well, all the intricacies of its operation and combat use. "Sea Wolf", as we jokingly called Melnikov, was a reliable comrade, a good adviser and consultant.

I also have the warmest memories of my other comrades in the department, in DANIM. Ivan Ivanovich Gren, who replaced P.P. Sheshaev as director. For a long time he commanded the Crimean fortified region and was a major specialist in coastal artillery. And although he did not have an engineering education, he was well versed in technical matters. I.I. Gren led DANIMI for many years, did a lot to develop scientific research and strengthen the institute's ties with production. He made a great contribution to the organization of the defense of Leningrad during the Great Patriotic War.

Man I.I. Gren was firm, valued truth above all else, and never compromised his principles. The institute was aware of

such a case. Poorly versed in naval affairs, the then People's Commissar of the Navy P.N. Frinovsky at meetings now and then in a rather categorical form and, as a rule, inappropriately gave remarks and made remarks to the comrades who spoke. At the same time, in order to confirm the persuasiveness of his words, he turned to one of those present: "Am I right?" - and, having received an affirmative answer, was taken for the next speaker. And at one of these meetings, after another remark, Frinovsky asked for

support to I.I. Gren. Ivan Ivanovich got up and answered clearly in a military way:

- No, comrade Commissar. In this matter, you have not understood and speak incorrectly.

The reaction was stormy. However, the truth prevailed. The incompetence of P.N. Frinovsky soon became apparent in higher instances. After some time, he was relieved of the post of people's commissar. The Institute had versatile

and fruitful ties with enterprises and with the fleet. Apparently, it should be said that by decision of the Party in the early 1930s, a number of scientific research institutions and their branches were created in the country. All these centers, as a rule, branch-based, worked on specific problems, on the introduction of the achievements of science and technology into the national economy.

A number of institutes, including ours, were entrusted with improving the technical equipment of the army and navy. The "marine" profile of the institute also determined the range of tasks that we had to solve. The main efforts were focused on the development of projects for new weapons systems and control over the implementation of tactical and technical tasks at enterprises. Much attention was also paid to other issues, in particular, the study and generalization of experience in the operation of naval weapons, the development of tactical and technical requirements for one or another of its systems, instructions and manuals for their operation and combat use. From the first day I plunged

headlong into work. I was captivated and fascinated by everything: conducting the most complex calculations, and making drawings, and participating in consultations with scientists, customers and production workers, and actually performing the functions of an expert when it was necessary to evaluate the quality of the created sample.

I have always been happy to go to work. If you had to go on business trips to factories or ships for a long time, you missed the institute, your comrades. The feeling of deep mutual understanding and friendship added strength, encouraged me to work as best as possible.

Such a mood - I would call it a mood for work - was common in the team. We also had a common dedication to the matter, which makes us forget about everything, work as much as it takes to solve the task. Frankly, I see this as both an indispensable condition and an obligatory component of creativity. Namely, we, young engineers, got involved in creativity at DANIMI. The creative process is complex and contradictory. It includes the joy of discovery and the bitterness of failure, the agony of a long search, the hard work of everyday life and the flight of insights. I liked to penetrate into the mystery of the birth of new machines and mechanisms, to participate in their creation. I remember my first

experience of participating in the development of a rammer for a gun. The mechanism is not very complicated, but important. With its installation on the gun, the rate of fire increased, the work of the loader was facilitated. We tried to make it faster. However, the prototype, after a series of shots, seemed to weaken. The projectile sent by him to the breech fell back, breaking off the rammer tray. Increased pressure in the hydraulic system. The projectile began to ring into the breech of the barrel. Surrounding people joked: - We should be a little quieter, otherwise we will have to

catch shells from the muzzle. But the success was temporary. After a dozen shots, the same picture was repeated. What's the matter? After a long search, it turned out that the

locking device of the chambering mechanism was loosened, the projectile was fed into the breech with a warp and, naturally, could not reach the beginning of the rifling with a belt, and therefore was not kept in the breech at certain elevation angles of the gun. I had to strengthen the locking system of the rammer in the working position, and it began to work reliably.

It is difficult to convey the feeling of joy and pride that I experienced when the mechanism I developed was accepted. It was my first design task, and I coped with it. Gradually polished, consolidated

and acquired a clear professional orientation of knowledge, skills and abilities. An excellent school of creativity, a school of true professionalism and culture was close contact with prominent scientists, designers, and inventors. A deep imprint in my memory was left, in particular, by

consultations and meetings at the institute with the famous shipbuilder Academician A.N. Krylov. Alexei Nikolaevich had the ability to quickly understand the most complex issues, to find ways to solve them. He generously shared new ideas and encouraged us to develop them.

Communication with A.N. Krylov gave us visual lessons of efficiency and organization. He willingly helped in the search for something new, in solving complex problems and did not like those who were afraid of responsibility. As a rule, after each consultation, he wrote

concise and clear conclusions and recommendations that fit on one piece of paper, signed under them and handed them to the performer. Some tried to get such a signature from Krylov, then to hide behind it as a shield for possible miscalculations and mistakes. He quickly figured out such tricks and stopped them with his usual directness. There were also cases when Aleksey Nikolayevich listened attentively to a question, asked in detail about the difficulties encountered in solving it, and frankly said: "Do it yourself." You know better than me here. Krylov often stayed at the institute in order

to delve deeper into any

development, provoked the performers: "Come on, come on, and I'll learn from you."

Krylov had a sense of humor. He loved a clever joke, appreciated it, considered it as an assistant in work, and sometimes as a means of getting out of a difficult situation.

provisions.

Once, at one of the meetings, a dispute broke out between designers and customers. It was about the excess weight of weapons on one of the ships under construction. The surplus was not very significant, but the customers insisted that the weight be reduced, as this would allegedly affect some of the characteristics of the ship. The designers objected, arguing that it was impossible to do this without losing the necessary qualities of weapons. Passions flared up. A.N. Krylov silently listened to the arguments of the parties, but then, seizing a moment, raised his voice:

- What is the crew size? Everyone

fell silent, this question seemed so strange and even inappropriate: the number of the crew was well known, so why specify it. And then, what does the crew have to do with it, what does this have to do with the subject of the dispute?

But once the question is asked, it must be answered. Named a number. - Fine! - said Alexei Nikolaevich. "Now tell me, will each person be accepted on the ship by weight?" - No, of course not.

"Of course, of

course there is no need. Do you take into account that the team will change weight during the day for natural, so to speak, reasons? So, let me tell you, the fluctuations in the weight of the crew will be ... - And the academician named a figure comparable to the value of the excess weight of the weapons that caused controversy. The

situation was discharged, the debaters began to

smile. Along with Academician A.N. Krylov, Professor E.A. Berkalov, E.A. Brazin, D.A. Wentzel, B.N. Okunev, M.E. Serebryakov, S.P. Stavitsky, V.A. Unkovsky and others. This contributed to the use of the achievements of scientific thought in research and projects, and then in the development of production and in the practical application of the systems we developed. Even then it was clear that the combination of fundamental scientific research, development work and production was the right way to timely upgrade technology, equipment, and

technological processes. We also understood the need for reciprocal steps in science and production, shortening the time for mastering discoveries, translating them into highly efficient machines, devices, and technological lines. Today, this problem has acquired particular urgency. Concentrating its efforts on its solution, the Party proceeds from the fact that the strengthening of the economic and defense might of the country and the growth of the people's well-being are directly connected with this. An important role in accelerating scientific and technological progress and realizing its achievements rightfully belongs to the Soviet technical intelligentsia.

Happiness difficult roads

Probably everyone is familiar with joyful and at the same time a little sad

the state that you experience when a difficult section of the path is left behind, which required a lot of work, high tension of spiritual and physical strength. What he was striving for at the beginning of the path has been achieved, and this gives rise to satisfaction, but the thought is already rushing further, forward, and an impatient expectation of new work, new trials, and overcoming new difficulties is ripening in the soul.

Behind me is a long life filled with work, struggle, diverse connections with many people. And I will take the liberty of

asserting that true happiness is possible only when the path chosen by a person coincides with the main direction of movement of the whole people - the direction of social progress and peace. Of all the roads, the most difficult are the roads that are not beaten. Such is the road that our country is following under the leadership of the Leninist Party. It goes through historical virgin lands, paving the route to the future for all mankind. Is this road easy? No. The first is never easy. But here we are talking about the revolutionary transformation of the life of a huge power, a great people.

We are proud of our country. And we really have something to be proud of. How long ago did we start fulfilling our first five-year plan? The USSR has become a powerful industrial-collective-farm socialist power with a dynamic economy and strong defense. To achieve this, an incredible exertion

of all the forces of the Party and the people was required. There were no errors or omissions. A growing threat of aggression from imperialism hung over us continuously. The situation compelled us to hurry, to do first of all what led to the achievement of economic independence and the strengthening of the country's defense capability. During this period, the period of technical reconstruction, the full-scale

offensive of socialism along all fronts, cadres, specialists in all branches of the national economy, especially engineers, played an important role.

I was pleased that I chose the profession of an engineer. At the same time, I was proud that I had the opportunity to participate in the work to strengthen the country's defense capability. I recall the words of the famous Soviet designer of small arms M.T. Kalashnikova: "Not everyone is destined to sow bread or stand at the machine, because today with the enemy, as once my legendary namesake, you can't get rid of with one fist ..."

Yes, the peaceful labor of the people needs protection. And for it, you need to have the appropriate funds. And we had to make the most of the respite that had fallen to us in order to properly prepare for repulsing the new aggression, the plans of which were nurtured by international imperialism. His militaristic preparations compelled us to expand military production, re-equip the army and navy with new military equipment. This was the subject of my work as a designer at DANIM. I was completely absorbed by her. After all, the process of forming a new technical idea is rarely the result of a happy insight. This, as a rule, is the result of an intense search, many experiments, their analysis, verification, new and new repetition. Creative thinking, if it is really creative, cannot be interrupted at the end of the working day and resumed again at its beginning, "turned off" for lunch, on Sunday, on vacation ... It is continuous. There are gratifying ups and downs in this work, but there are also downs, there are periods of inspiration and ... almost despair ... But even when the idea is formulated and framed in the form of drawings and calculations, how much work, energy, perseverance, perseverance, perseverance, and often courage, it requires implementation! The work of a person involved in the creation of a new one is generally not easy.

For us, the workers of the institute, it was not easy, also because a lot had to be done very quickly: time hurried us, made strict demands on us as engineers, as

specialists.

It was during my years at DANIMI – first as a staff member and then as head of research – that I developed an idea of how

there must be an engineer in the broadest sense of the word - an engineer as a helmsman of the economic mechanism, as a designer, tester, and production worker.

First of all, this is not only a diversified person, thinking creatively, deeply understanding the direction of his activity, but also actively participating in public life, influencing its development. I want to emphasize this side of the engineer's activity, because it is precisely this side that is decisive. Characteristic in this regard were the 1920s and 1930s, when the issue of engineering personnel became acute. Many engineers, trained even before the revolution, turned out to be unsuitable for solving the new tasks put forward by the party. And not because they were poor specialists, but mainly because they did not understand the essence of the new, socialist transformations and could not be an active link in carrying out these transformations.

The spiritual world, all the deeds and aspirations of the Soviet engineer are based on the solid foundation of the Marxist-Leninist teaching. He is the flesh of the flesh of the people, lives his life, his interests, is aware of his responsibility to the people and does everything to be as useful to him as possible.

Of course, over time, the requirements for an engineer are filled with new content, but, I think, in their fundamental principle, they remain unchanged.

In my memoirs and reflections, I pay a lot of attention to engineers. This does not mean at all that other professions: a doctor, a teacher, an artist, a writer, a locksmith, a milling machine operator, a turner, a combine operator, are less respected and valuable for society. Of course no! I write about this more because I myself am an engineer, because in my work I most often had to complete tasks with the help of engineers and relying primarily on them. Scientists, designers, shop managers, factory directors, research associates and heads of scientific institutions - all these are our Soviet engineers, regardless of their positions and positions.

What do I see as the fundamental difference between a Soviet engineer and a bourgeois one? This is not a technocrat whom the ideologists of the West place outside of politics, above politics. Put, of course, not by chance. They fulfill the social order of big capital, which needs well-trained specialists, but devoid of political self-awareness, who are able to combine the achievements of scientific and technological progress with production with the sole goal of increasing profits and super-profits of monopolies.

As for the specific, professional, actually engineering qualities, out of all their diversity, I would single out, first of all, a good theoretical background. Without this, it is difficult, if not impossible, to see the internal dynamics of the processes taking place in a particular area of an engineer's activity, to understand and foresee the trends in the development of engineering and technology in this area. An important place in the theoretical training of an engineer, along with basic profiling knowledge, belongs, in my opinion, to mathematics.

Until now, with deep gratitude, I remember an excellent teacher, an expert in applied mathematics, Professor N.S. Michelson. We, the students, called him "luminary" in our circle. He instilled in us the conviction that any phenomenon studied from a quantitative point of view can be reliably understood and fully used in the interests of the cause only with the skillful application of mathematical calculations. This primarily applies to phenomena associated with the design, design, production, operation of equipment, in a word, with all types of engineering activities proper. It is no coincidence that M.V. Lomonosov called mathematics "the ruler of all mental research." And there's one more thing I can't say. I can't imagine a good engineer without a sense of the new. The

constant striving for it stimulates the search for non-standard solutions, the most rational ways to achieve the goal. It is very important that the feeling of the new be active, that it be supported by a persistent desire to introduce this new into practice.

The new, progressive in technology, as well as in life in general, wins in the end. This is certainly true. But it is also true that it never asserts itself, automatically. The reasons for this are various, including often the inertia, conservatism of certain leaders or workers, on whom the solution of the issue depends and who do not want to part with obsolete, but so familiar to them, promising a calm life ideas. That is why the feeling of the new also presupposes simply human, civic courage, readiness and ability to overcome the psychological barrier of routine. Of course, the struggle for the new has nothing in common either with technical nihilism, or with the sweeping denial of what has already been achieved, or with far-fetched, groundless "innovations." Its end result is a synthesis of scientific and technological achievements and experience, bold decisions and practical expediency.

Whoever works as an engineer, in any case, he must have a high culture of conducting production, the ability to organize business, ensure the implementation of the decision made, and the accurate work of those links in the technological chain that are entrusted to him. The culture of production is put forward today as one of the defining features of the professional image of an engineer. Every

engineer masters this culture in the process of practical activity. We learned organization, efficiency, composure from each other, looked closely at the style of work of more experienced senior comrades. A vivid example for us at that time was the activity of S.M. Kirov. Unfortunately, I did not have a chance to meet him personally, but I was lucky to study and then work in Leningrad just at the time when he was in charge of the regional party organization. His influence was felt everywhere in the city. When Sergei Mironovich spoke, his speech ignited the listeners with that special fire of creativity and selflessness that were characteristic of Kirov himself. Everything that he undertook, he necessarily brought to the end.

Once upon a time in youthful years, Sergei Mironovich dreamed of becoming a mechanical engineer. Fate prepared something else for him - revolutionary and party work. But this did not prevent S.M. Kirov competently lead the industrial renewal of Leningrad. He sought to understand everything, promptly supported the new, resolutely brushed aside the old, obsolete. His first demand was: if done, it is better than what is or can be abroad. For big things, he never missed the so-called little things and dealt with them just as responsibly and in a businesslike manner. Sergei Mironovich often said that there are no trifles in socialism.

In the late 1920s and early 1930s, there was a shortage of funds in the country. There was an acute problem of improving the living conditions of workers, the development of public utilities in Leningrad. Some party and economic workers considered this a matter of secondary importance, which could be dealt with later, when we become richer. Sergey Mironovich Kirov treated this differently.

Once the secretary of the Petrograd district committee of the party, Sobolev, told such a story. - He came in, - he recalled, - Kirov came to me one evening and asked: "You have been in was there a bath? - "For a long time". "Let's go wash."

Sobolev was surprised. Why go to the bath if there is a bath at home. But Kirov insisted. I had to go.

Even from a distance, as Sobolev said, they saw a long queue. We got up. Tickets are not sold. It turns out that the wardrobe is full of outerwear. Bought tickets. We went into the waiting room. Queue. There are no free lockers. They survived again. Get undressed. There are no basins for washing. We waited. We entered the washing room, but could not immediately wash ourselves, as hot water was supplied intermittently. We stood in line again. I didn't have to take a steam bath - the steam room was closed for repairs. We left the bath late at night.

Sergey Mironovich asks: - Well, how, secretary, did you wash yourself well? In a word, that visit to the bathhouse with Kirov, said Sobolev, was better than any strict

resolution. I had to urgently take care of the bath house, so as not to again get to wash with Mironych, and to look after other matters more carefully, not to lose sight of anything.

Every job is done by people. Both success and failure depend on them. And if all the activities of an engineer will be reduced only to the fulfillment of tasks in production, and all other issues in the life of the work collective will remain out of his field of vision, then after some time even a knowledgeable specialist will lose credibility in this team. Moreover, he will not be able to grow into a leader, a production commander.

The formation of organizational skills of an engineer is not an easy task. It presupposes, first of all, a strong, organic connection between a higher educational institution and production, with the labor collectives of brigades, workshops, and the entire plant. I have already mentioned how fruitful this connection was at LVMI during my studies there. Undoubtedly, she played a big role in ensuring the high quality of training of future engineers at our institute, the prestige of which, by the way, was very high both in industry and in the country's research organizations. At present, of course, the matter of training highly

qualified specialists has stepped far ahead. Excellent results are obtained by the ever more complete merging of the educational and teaching-research processes with the production. It provides a close link between higher education and the branches of the national economy, and creates precisely the environment in which an engineer with a broad social and industrial outlook is formed. Namely, specialists of this type increasingly determine the style of economic activity, the pace of progress in the economy, science and culture.

In my lifetime, I have met many excellent engineers. I will name only B.I. Kanevsky, N.G. Kostrulina, I.N. Kupriyanova, L.V. Lyul'eva, V.V. Naumenko, S.M. Nikolaev, V.N. Novikova, A.E. Nudelman, V.A. Podobryansky, A.F. Popova, D.A. Ryzhkova, V.M. Ryabikova, E.V. Sinilshchikova, L.V. Smirnova ... Can you name them all! Wonderful people, solid, dedicated, in love with their profession. They started as ordinary engineers, matured in work, gained strength, gained wings. Many of them grew up before my eyes into prominent scientists, business executives, party and state leaders.

I will not hide my long-standing sympathy for engineers - production workers, the most numerous and, I believe, the vanguard detachment of our technical intelligentsia. This attitude began to take shape in me during my years of work at the Leningrad Artillery Research Institute. Then many tasks had to be solved literally side by side with factory engineers. And I often in a good way envied their tenacious practical acumen, their ability to translate even the most sophisticated technical ideas into the language of a specific, working technology, understandable to those who stand at the machine, who embody these ideas in metal. This skill seemed to me a very important component of engineering

skill, and I strove to master it, sparing neither time nor effort for this.

Sometimes I happened to spend day and night at the plant in order to achieve the timely production of prototypes, the development of one or another part or assembly. More often than at other factories, I happened to visit the Bolshevik. Here I knew many workers, became friends with them, studied the production in some detail, in a word, I considered the plant almost my second place of work.

And therefore, when in the summer of 1937 I was offered to go to the design bureau of the Bolshevik plant, I agreed without much hesitation.

Factory

The plant has a special place in my destiny. And although I have in mind, first of all, the Leningrad Bolshevik, with which I have some of the most, perhaps, the most complete,

rich, happy years of life, we are still talking about the plant in the broadest sense. When I say "factory", I see production buildings, and I have seen a lot of them: old, smoky, squat, and wooden, knocked together in a hurry, and new ones, made of aluminum, glass and concrete. I imagine blast furnaces and open-hearth furnaces, blooming and presses, conveyor lines, machine tools, power plants, laboratories. I hear a powerful factory breath, in which the unique rumble of boiling steel, the sonorous trills of filling machines and gantry cranes, the deep roar of machine tools and the singing of chips under the cutter merge together. I feel the unique smell of working metal, infused with oils and emulsions, reeking of smoke and soot, roasted by the thousand-degree flame of converters and moulds. I see factory workers - workers, engineers, production managers, employees - people whom I recognize among thousands of others. There is poetry that captivates a person in the guise of a plant - this center of machines

and mechanisms, materialized technical thought. There is, because the plant is a concentrated embodiment of Creation, the personification of Labor. The plant entered my life as a child. Mother pronounced this word respectfully, as if it were a living being.

"The factory is holding up our father for a long time," she said, glancing out the window, behind which twilight was quickly gathering. And

father, when the conversation touched on things especially serious, significant, the main he considered the attitude of the plant to such things to be the criterion of truth.

I remember the conversation in the family about the letter published in the spring of 1918 by V.I. Lenin to the St. Petersburg workers "On the famine". The letter had already been discussed at the factory, but, apparently, it hit the nerve so hard that Peter and his father continued to talk about it at home. Turning to his mother and Nikolai, Peter now and then picked up Pravda and, after reading out a passage from the letter, said: "Well said!" And I eagerly listened to the simple, but soul-grabbing words that whoever does not work, let him not eat, that iron revolutionary power is needed to defeat hunger, as many iron detachments as possible of a conscious and infinitely devoted to communism proletariat are needed. The words "iron", "iron", which Peter uttered with special pressure, stuck in my memory. I also remember how the father, who supported Peter with approving remarks, at the end of the conversation put his heavy palm on the newspaper with Lenin's letter and said:

Yes, it's written correctly. The whole plant

thinks so. And it sounded so weighty that no other words were needed. I

must say that I was intimately acquainted with very many people who treated the plant with respect, love and pride. Who to name? Honestly, I'm lost. Many have long since died. The former director of the Leningrad plant "Krasny Putilovets" K.M. Ots - a native of Bolshevik workers, I.A. Likhachev - worker, director of the Moscow Automobile Plant, People's Commissar for Mechanical Engineering, Minister of Motor Transport and Highways of the USSR, P.I. Korobov is a hereditary worker who in a short time went from a gasman to the director of Magnitogorsk. I remember Nikolai Petrovich Povalyaev, Daniil Petrovich Shchuchkin, Mikhail Andreevich Sedov - wonderful workers from Bolshevik, who associated all the best in themselves with the plant. Sometimes the plant seems to me a wonderful forge in which a personality is forged and tempered. The personality of the worker. And

sometimes, perhaps, because the blood of my grandfathers and great-grandfathers speaks in me - the original plowmen, it begs to be compared with a cornfield, only its harvest is not daily bread, but the technical power of the Fatherland.

I am happy that for many years I have been involved in the beautiful of my creative work. completeness, its spirituality to the process of creation and increase of this power.

I clearly remember that June day in 1937, when I was heading to the entrance of the Bolshevik plant, no longer as a representative of a research institute - a person, in general, an outsider to the plant, but as its legitimate employee, an employee of the factory

design bureau. Of course

I was proud of it. After all, Bolshevik is one of the oldest factories in the country, in the past the Obukhovskiy steel plant, known for its revolutionary traditions. Among the first open political actions of the Russian proletariat was the Obukhov strike, which escalated on May 7, 1901 into a fierce clash with the police and troops.

She went down in history as the Obukhov defense. The words of Vladimir Ilyich about the Obukhovites sounded to the whole world: "The workers' uprising is suppressed, long live the workers' uprising!" Now they are carved on the pedestal of the monument to Ilyich, installed on the territory of the plant. There is also a memorial plaque on which it is minted:

"It was built in memory of the speech at the rally of the workers of the Obukhov plant of the Great leader of the world proletariat Vladimir Ilyich Lenin in May 1917. To the leader of the workers - the workers of the Bolshevik plant, April 23, 1924. In the days of October, the Red Guards-Obukhov guarded the headquarters of the revolution - Smolny. And when the war against internal and external counter-revolution began, the plant carried out important orders for the Red Army and Navy. On the fifth anniversary of Soviet power, he was given the honorary name - "Bolshevik".

The plant developed and grew strong together with the young country. New workshops and laboratories appeared. The equipment was updated. The first Soviet tractors were created here, and then the first Soviet aircraft engines. From year to year it improved steel production. Bolshevik passed on its experience to such industrial giants as Uralmash, Magnitogorsk, Kuznetsk, Kramatorsk plants, manufactured equipment for the largest new buildings in the country, including the Moscow Metro. With honors, a special government order for the manufacture of steel frames for the Kremlin stars was also fulfilled at the plant.

High-quality forgings and castings of "Bolshevik" provided the Soviet turbine and generator building, shipbuilding, oil, chemical, coal industries and other leading sectors of the national economy. Along with peaceful products, the plant carried out military orders, mainly for the Navy. Their volume increased especially in the mid-1930s, when, as a result of the growing threat of aggression, the country was forced to build up its defense capability.

In the development of the production of military products, all the experience accumulated in the past was used. But, of course, there was a need to improve equipment and technology, to update manufactured products. I also had to participate in this work. Frankly, I was glad to see such a turn in my life, glad despite the fact that over the years of work at DANIMI I became close to the institute, to my colleagues in the department. It was a pity to leave the institute, but at the same time I wanted to get closer to production. A few more comrades arrived at the design bureau from different places. In particular, the teacher Mikhail Yakovlevich Krupchatnikov moved from the military-mechanical institute to the plant. I knew him well. In the new replenishment of the design bureau were B.G. Lisichkin, B.S. Korobov. I managed to get acquainted with Vasily Mikhailovich Ryabikov, who was sent to the factory design bureau after graduating from the Naval Academy. I must say that Vasily Mikhailovich Ryabikov - and with him I was associated with joint work for many years, including the

entire Great Patriotic War and the long post-war period - was a model of efficiency. They said about him that he was dry. But it was purely external impression. Vasily Mikhailovich was kind and sympathetic, quickly converged with people. He was respected for his firmness and integrity. These qualities were successfully combined with versatile erudition and high efficiency. And, I think, it is quite natural that a short time after our arrival at the factory design bureau, the Bolshevik communists elected Ryabikov as secretary, and the Neutral Committee of the party approved him as their representative at the factory - party organizer N. K.

We were met in the design office well. The volume of work in it increased, and our replenishment turned out to be most welcome. With many comrades we had to

already doing joint work, and we knew each other to some extent. Therefore, almost no time was required for lapping, they immediately got involved in the work.

The design bureau was headed by Ilya Ivanovich Ivanov, a great scientist and talented engineer, a skilled organizer and teacher. I knew him from the Military Mechanical Institute, where he taught a course in the design of special systems. We listened to his lectures with great interest. Even in my student years, I remember the article "More of such teachers" in the institute's circulation, and later I managed to find the issue in which it was printed. Here is what it, in particular, said about I.I. Ivanov: "His accuracy and discipline, attention to the audience, exceptional teaching of the course in a methodical sense, deep knowledge of his subject, skillful linking of questions with factory practice ... the high intensity of the presentation of the course ensures a deep assimilation of the subject by the students and fruitful independent work in the future. For us... Ilya Ivanovich is the best example of how to work." And indeed, figuratively speaking, Ilya Ivanovich infected many with his love for the design business, for the profession of engineer. Already at that time he headed the design bureau of the plant, carried out a lot of social work, wrote textbooks and manuals, he himself was engaged in the design of complex systems. And besides all this, he worked a lot and fruitfully with students.

And now I had to work under the direct supervision of this person, which, of course, could not but rejoice me. Yes, and Ilya Ivanovich, it seemed to me, was pleased that in the replenishment of the design bureau there were pupils of the military mechanical institute. The head of the design bureau was attentive and sensitive to young

designers, carefully raised them, knew how to notice and develop their strengths. It is important that he showed confidence in the workers, provided them with complete independence. Many employees received assignments and carried them out themselves from start to finish. Work was carried out in several directions at once, on several products. The chief designer intervened only when failures were brewing. Here he provided active and concrete assistance, suggested ways out of dead ends. All assignments were usually completed on time. When giving a task, Ilya Ivanovich usually said:

"Think everything over and get to work. If something is not clear, tell me. After a day or two, he always came up, was interested in how things were going. During the conversation, he finally revealed whether the task was being performed correctly. If the employee correctly solved the problem, he no longer disturbed. It created a truly creative

environment. At the same time, the responsibility was also high: after all, a specific contractor worked on each design task. There was no duplication. To frustrate the fulfillment of the task meant to let everyone down, the whole team. And I don't remember a single case that someone by the deadline something

didn't.

It is no coincidence that many people from our design bureau later became well-known designers, heads of design bureaus. Among them are Evgeny Georgievich Rudyak, Mikhail Yakovlevich Krupchatnikov and others. Many designers with great experience worked in the design bureau. For example,

Nikolai Alexandrovich Popov has been working at the plant since 1930. He was remembered for his extraordinary scrupulousness. Everyone in the design bureau knew that if the work was done by Popov, mistakes were excluded. Being involved in the organization of the manufacture of the product, he did not give rest to himself or his group until production was established. Konstantin Vasilyevich Grachev, Nikanor Vasilyevich Matukaitis, and other designers were also experienced workers. Speaking of

experience, one should keep in mind the relativity of this concept. 5-7 years of work in the design bureau were already considered a significant experience. In general, the designers at the plant were entirely young: the "oldest" of us, Ilya Ivanovich, was not even forty years old at that time.

There were in KB and people are unique in their own way. Among them, Vera Mikhailovna Rosenberg occupied a special place. She was a born mathematician, thoroughly knew the theory of strength of materials, theoretical mechanics. Most of the calculations in the design were assigned to it. And Vera Mikhailovna performed them, as a rule, with brilliance. However, she often used her own methods.

It was said that even in her youth, Vera Mikhailovna devoted all her free time to compiling all kinds of equations. I wrote them on the sand on the river bank, on the floor of the veranda and in other places where it was possible to draw mathematical symbols. At the same time, leaves of trees, flower petals, and other, sometimes the most unthinkable objects, were often expressed by equations. She paid no attention to ridicule about this. In mathematical studies, she found true pleasure.

Vera Mikhailovna was often approached for assistance by A.N. Krylov, for whom she worked for a long time on the technical committee, Ilya Ivanovich Ivanov. Once, at a meeting in the design bureau, the issue of creating another system for a new ship was discussed. There was very little input. Ilya Ivanovich turned to Vera Mikhailovna:

- Where do we start and how to make calculations?

The answer was unexpected:

- So it's clear even to a fool!

"Yes, yes, hm ..." Ilya Ivanovich managed to show with his disarming smile comedy of the

situation. Everyone

laughed. Vera Mikhailovna at first did not understand what was the matter. Then, recollecting herself, she apologized and began to explain how she imagines the calculation method of the new system.

Ilya Ivanovich listened attentively, offered to approve the methodology, and in conclusion he said with a smile: - Well,

now it has become clear to us, right? And

again there was laughter in the office. When Vera

Mikhailovna was engaged in calculations, she renounced everything. We understood this well and tried not to disturb her. Moreover, any requests to speed up calculations, increase their accuracy, etc. were inappropriate and even insulting to some extent, since Vera Mikhailovna worked at her maximum even without reminders. And there was a lot of work in the design bureau. If earlier the plant was more engaged in repairs, now it was faced with the task of developing and launching new systems into mass production. Much had to be done to modernize existing guns, improve ballistics, rate of fire, increase the survivability of barrels and the system as a whole. Therefore, the design was carried out simultaneously with the organization of production.

The fact that the plant did not have a good experimental base made it difficult to work. The head sample was made on the same machines where mass production was carried out. In a short time it was necessary to create a sample, comprehensively test it and put it into series.

Finding ways to test the reliability of mechanisms, the combat capabilities of the new system required considerable ingenuity from designers and manufacturers. The matter was complicated by the imperfect collection and processing of information about the latest in science and technology, the backlog of the drawing, copying and archival economy, which lacked trained specialists. This, in essence, simple technical work, designers were also forced to come off. In doing so, we had no right to be wrong. After all, the ships for which the developed artillery systems were

intended were already being built and strictly according to the plan should have been introduced into the Navy.

Naturally, we tried to make full use of the design experience we already had. But it was precisely new developments that met the requirements of the time, and even better - at least one or two steps ahead of these requirements, that were urgently needed. Each of us understood how important it is for defense.

The events taking place in the world caused deep concern. They hurried us, obligated us to work even harder and more persistently. It was

1937. German fascism made its claims louder and louder. Japanese militarism also became impudent. Germany and Japan completely switched their economies to prepare for war. Its fire has already blazed in a number of regions of the globe. The Japanese militarists entrenched themselves in the northeastern provinces and began to colonize all of China. The peoples of Abyssinia and Spain were subjected to aggression. Clouds were gathering over the world. Everything indicated that imperialism was driving them in the direction of the Soviet Union.

Events hurried us. We had to counter the threat of aggression with force. The Party and the people worked hard to create and strengthen it. Our design bureau also contributed to the solution of this problem.

I was convinced of this, so to speak, with my own eyes, often being in the Navy, going out to sea on ships, participating in the testing of weapons models developed by us. And every time it gave a new acceleration to the continuous process of creativity, gave rise to new design and engineering ideas, suggested ways to solve certain technical issues. I was very fond of being on

ships, communicating with sailors, these courageous, strong, friendly people. Memories of business trips to ships in those distant 30s are among the most dear to me. and when in the spring of 1983 I went up on the deck of the cruiser "Kirov" to meet with the warriors of the North Sea, these memories flooded over me again. Almost half a century has passed, new people, new, incomparably more powerful than the battleships of those years "Marat", "Paris Commune", "October Revolution", a modern cruiser, and suddenly something recognizably relatives and friends blew over me ... I will always remember with what great respect the sailors treated us, the armed designers. I think they treated the designers in the same way. And this is natural. From the time I worked at the factory design bureau, I was convinced that a designer is not a position, but a vocation. The calling is high, but not easy.

The designer does not create alone. Technologists, economists, toolmakers, turners, locksmiths, millers, assemblers take a great part in its work. The ability to connect in time, use their knowledge, experience, their skill is one of the most important qualities of a designer. In his work, foresight is of great importance. And it is based on deep, constantly updated knowledge. Self-improvement, persistent self-education is not a good wish, but an objective necessity. To neglect it means to stop and hopelessly lag behind. The desire for professional growth, improving skills, expanding the general outlook - without this there is no designer. The designer is required to do what is provided for by the task, due to the initial requirements, and not what he gets. It

should give out new technical ideas and solutions. And their search is, as a rule, a long rough work, in which there is nothing secondary, insignificant, in which everything is interconnected, everything is necessary and important.

Let's say, in a complex system, a bolt or a spring is at first glance a trifle. But if they break, then the system fails. And the designer must clearly understand how this or that part will work in practice. It happens that the system is already ready, being put to the test, and the designer intuitively grabs some part in reserve, just in case. My comrades sometimes also joked with me that I always carried in my pocket either a bolt, or a spring, or a washer, or some other spare part for the system being tested. - What, again took

weapons to fight with customers? I laughed it off, but

continued to act as before. Changing the part during the tests allowed them to be carried out without delay, and in the meantime, measures could be taken to fine-tune the unit that turned out to be weak.

In general, in finalizing, in fine-tuning the design, business

interaction with production workers, including foremen-workers. One of these masters on the "Bolshevik" was a fitter Yevgeny Ivanovich Kanishchev. You used to bring him a drawing. He studies it carefully. And suddenly he points his finger at some knot:

- Did you calculate everything correctly here? Isn't it weak?

Everyone knew that if Ivanych, as we all called him, was on the alert, it was necessary to calculate the knot again, or even make changes to the design. Almost certainly, where the master indicated, there really was a weakness. Subsequently, both at Bolshevik and at other plants,

especially during the Great Patriotic War, I more than once had to involve people like Kanishchev, craftsmen, real masters of their craft, to solve complex design and technological problems. In the joint friendly work of designers, production workers, workers, I see one of the most important features of socialist production - a

common desire to complete the task better, faster, more reliably. For such a fusion of interests and goals, we have fertile social ground in our country: both the worker and the engineer are equally masters of production, they participate equally in all the affairs of the labor collective.

Combining the efforts of workers and engineering and technical workers, managers of all ranks, administration in the production process is an important condition for its intensification, no matter what area a person works, he must fulfill his duties conscientiously and honestly. It is this kind of work that is the main measure of the dignity of a person in our country, whether you are a designer or a mechanic, an astronaut or a farmer, a soldier or a minister. And since labor is the only source of increasing the power and

wealth of the Motherland, the people's well-being, the conscious, zealous attitude of every Soviet person to public duty is the most basic, most reliable guarantee of the successful solution of all the tasks facing the country.

Chapter 3

Eve

Confidence

The winter of 1937/38 in the cycle of factory affairs and worries flashed somehow imperceptibly. I was completely absorbed in the work, and the spring began unusually early and amicably.

At the end of March, a new sharp turn took place in my fate - I was appointed director of the Bolshevik plant. It seemed that just yesterday he was appointed as a design engineer in the factory design bureau and, not without timidity, for the first time in this role, approached the checkpoint. And now behind the conversation in the regional committee of the party, the people's commissariat, in the Central Committee of the CPSU (b). I am a director.

Everything happened quickly and unexpectedly for me. One evening I was informed that, since the chief designer of the plant was ill, I, as his deputy, would have to report to A.A. tomorrow. Zhdanov about the work of the design bureau. There was very little time for preparation. There was no question of compiling a written report. I just thought about its content and sketched out a plan.

Arrived at the Smolny at the appointed time. Andrei Alexandrovich first asked if I had been in the party for a long time, whether I was getting moral satisfaction from the new job, how things were going at the factory, how I was living, and whether it was crowded in the same room with a family of four. The conversation took on an informal character. I reported on the work of the design bureau, on bottlenecks, difficulties, and expressed my thoughts on what it is desirable to do in the near future and in the future. Apparently, my report and the answers to the questions he asked satisfied A.A. Zhdanov. Finishing the conversation, he asked how I managed in a short

time to study production. I replied that I had established close ties with the plant long before moving there, and work in the design bureau, daily visits to the main workshops and active participation in the life of the plant party organization made it possible to quickly understand both the general state of affairs and the problems of the further development of the enterprise.

Soon I was summoned again to Smolny, and then to Moscow - to the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks - and was offered to head the Bolshevik team. The party's enormous confidence had to be justified by deeds. I clearly understood that the director was responsible to the party and the government for everything at the plant: for the moral and political atmosphere in a team of many thousands, the unconditional fulfillment of the plan, the observance of labor discipline by all workers, and even for himself. After all, everyone looks at the director, they see when he comes and goes, what he does and how he does it, how he talks to people, how close he is to them. Returning from Moscow, I went straight from the station to the factory.

I went up to the second floor of the plant administration. I went into the director's office, sat down at the table and thought about how and where to start working in a new position. My thoughts were interrupted by a phone call. - Comrade Ustinov? the telephone operator asked.

- Comrade Zhdanov will speak with you. Immediately
a familiar voice rang out in the receiver: "Hello, Comrade Ustinov. - Hello, Andrey Alexandrovich. - Have you been back
for a long time? Everything is fine? Fine. Get in the
know. And tomorrow, right in the morning,
I ask you to come to me. And invite the secretary
of the party committee with you. Agreed? Well, see you. Short beeps were heard in the receiver, and I continued to hold it to my ear. Then he caught himself and dialed Ryabikov's phone number. Vasily Mikhailovich answered

immediately, as if he had only been waiting for my call, and immediately came to the director's office. I told him about the trip to Moscow, about Zhdanov's call. We discussed what materials should be looked at in order to prepare for tomorrow's conversation in the regional party committee. My heart became calmer - as if a particle of Ryabikov's confidence and optimism was transmitted to me. It so happened that I took the first steps at the plant hand in hand with Ryabikov, and now, at a new important stage in my life, he was again there. A reliable, strong shoulder of a comrade means a lot.

In the early morning of the next day, having once again discussed with Vasily Mikhailovich a number of issues that concerned the state of affairs at the plant and seemed to us the most important, we were in Smolny, in the reception room of a candidate member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, First Secretary of the Leningrad Regional Committee and

City Committee Party A.A. Zhdanov. Andrei Alexandrovich got up to meet us, shook hands warmly, congratulated me on appointment.

- Well, - he said with satisfaction, - now you will have a strong team. Should work! After all, you and Ryabikov, if I am not mistaken, have known each other for a long time and far from being a hat. You do not need knowledge. Gunpowder, too, I think, is in abundance. Right? well and
experience is a thing.

Zhdanov said all this as we walked from the middle of the spacious office, where he met us, to the table, while we sat down on chairs, he spoke affably and simply. And I felt the tension subside, a calm clarity, consonant with Zhdanov's tone, appeared in my thoughts. "And your plant is still working poorly," he continued. "You know as well as I do that the state plan has not

been carried out for several years now. And this is despite the rich technical capabilities that the plant has. Have you thought about why this happens? After all, your people are wonderful, and they really know how to work. But at the plant there is no proper order, discipline, responsibility for the assigned work. People are tired of the storm and carelessness. Have you noticed how tiring people lack of discipline?

Disorganization puts even good workers in the position of lagging behind. So what is the most important thing for you now, the most important thing? Discipline. Our, Bolshevik, conscious discipline, the discipline of action, initiative, activity. How to achieve it? In Lenin you will find a clear answer to this question. It is necessary to raise educational and organizational work and combine it with economic work. In other words, each production event must be politically supported, remember that technology, equipment repair, and drawing facilities are all political issues, issues of working with people. The conversation went on in Zhdanov's office for more than an hour. Subsequently, I had to meet with

Andrey Alexandrovich more than once, and I was convinced again and again that the desire to help in time, encourage, suggest ways to solve the most pressing problems, based on the ability to subtly and correctly feel the psychological state of both an individual and many people, is not an accident, not an episode in the activities of one of the prominent leaders of our Party, but an integral element of this activity. In any case, from my very first steps as a director, I constantly felt the attention, support and effective help of the city committee and the regional party committee.

In general, I knew the plant quite well, but now I began to look at many things with different eyes. This is understandable - the level of responsibility has become different. That is why I decided to get acquainted with the plant as if anew - to go through all the divisions, plunge into the thick of the workers, get first-hand information about the state of affairs in various areas. It was also convenient to do this because the Commission of the People's Commissariat for Acceptance was working for the factory.

I note that such a "acquaintance again" allowed me to see with my own eyes the so-called bottlenecks at the plant, to listen to the opinion of workers, foremen, heads of workshops and sections on how these bottlenecks should be "embroidered". I also got to know the commanders of the main factory units better, I learned not in the office environment, when many things are seen and perceived differently, but directly at the workplace, where their main activity takes place. The head of one of the workshops, reporting to me, obviously deliberately selected only gloomy facts, said that with all his diligence, it was impossible to work better. So why isn't the plan being carried out? I

asked, interrupting the flow of explanations. Because he's just unreal! - said the head of the department.

- Execute it
allow for objective reasons.

I decided to stay in the workshop to find out what these "objective reasons" are. I talked with the workers, foremen, the secretary of the party organization, the communists of the workshop. I looked at how production is organized, how people are placed, how fully the capacities available in the workshop are used. It turned out that the main reasons for the backlog of the workshop are by no means objective, but purely subjective. The head of the workshop turned out to be an inveterate conservative and bureaucrat who, instead of working with people, preferred to sit in his office, knew production poorly, did not support the initiative of workers, did not consult with them, believing in his exclusivity and infallibility.

It became clear to me that this leader does not enjoy authority in the team and the sooner we replace him, the better it will be for the cause. And indeed, the workshop began to work more successfully after the replacement of its head and the measures taken by the party committee to intensify the work of the

workshop party organization. I must say that even if not so often, I still had to meet such leaders in the future. And I always felt a sense of bitterness, bewilderment and annoyance. This means that the trust that is given to a person is not justified by him. And what could be more precious than trust? It concentrates a good attitude towards the employee, a high appreciation of his business and political qualities, respect for him, the hope that he

with maximum benefit will serve the common cause in the place entrusted to him. To be worthy of trust means to justify it with everyday hard, selfless work, the highest demands on oneself, incorruptible honesty in words and deeds.

It is known how confidence inspires a person, how it increases his strength, what confidence inspires. But this does not at all exclude control over its activities. On the contrary, practice shows that trust gives the proper effect when it is combined with high demands. After all, leadership is first and foremost a responsibility. And the higher the post

the greater the responsibility.

The party and the people give the leader the appropriate rights. The rights are often significant. But they are given in order for the leader to fully use them in the common interest. That is why his rights should never, under any circumstances, be separated from his duties. Whatever post he is entrusted with, the leader must remember his responsibility to people, always and in everything proceed from this responsibility. Only then the rights granted to him by the position are melted into the moral right to lead. In other words, such a right is the result of a combination in the guise and daily work of a leader of high ideological commitment, efficiency, hard work and discipline, the highest demands on himself, and incorruptible honesty. All this constitutes a solid vital basis of authority, gives it a really weighty, or, as they say, indisputable character. It is clear that authority is not given along with the position as an indispensable attribute. It is not won once and for all. It must be confirmed all your life and all your life ... An indispensable requirement for a leader of any rank is his knowledge of the matter. Along with this, a fighting party spirit is needed, when a person is internally convinced that he is

responsible for everything, enthusiasm for work is necessary, when it is not a pity to give it all his strength, energy, talent, and, finally, love for people is important, without which there is no real strong feedback, and, therefore, the words and deeds of the leader do not find the proper response and support. The leader must accumulate the opinion of the team in his decisions, be able to mobilize his creative potential to the maximum to complete the tasks. Our Party trains and educates remarkable cadres of leaders, true leaders, skilful organizers and educators of the masses, who enjoy the deepest prestige, sincere love and respect of the Soviet people. Vladimir Ilyich Lenin is an inspiring example of a leader for all of us. A theoretician of genius, a brilliant strategist and tactician of the revolutionary struggle, the founder of our party and state, the great architect of socialism, Lenin is infinitely dear and close to all people of good will and as the most humane person. Ilyich was uncompromisingly intolerant of all bureaucracy, administration, inertia, phrase-mongering, and irresponsibility.

It is known that, wanting to get a brief description of the employee, V.I. Lenin, as chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, asked for an assessment of the political views of this worker, his knowledge of the matter, administrative abilities, and conscientiousness. In general, any work of management, he believed, requires special properties. "... In order to manage," Vladimir Ilyich emphasized, "you need to be competent, you need to fully and accurately know all the conditions of production, you need to know the technology of this production at its modern height, you need to have a well-known scientific education"⁵.

The Party has been consistently and firmly putting these Leninist demands into practice since the first days of Soviet power. For me, as an economic manager, director of a plant, the most serious and instructive test was, for example, a report to the government in May 1938 - that is, less than two months after the appointment. And the preparation for the report was an extremely useful school not only for me, but for the entire management of the plant, for its party organization, for the entire team. We put the question this way: each

⁵ *Lenin V.I.* Poly. coll. op. T. 40. S. 215.

word, every line of the report should be based on a thorough analysis of the state of affairs, on thoroughly verified facts. All forces were mobilized for this.

I think that such a formulation of the question was the only correct one. It is impossible to start a real movement forward without giving yourself, to use Lenin's words, the most accurate account of the state of affairs, without fearlessly recognizing shortcomings in order to fight them more firmly. The thoughtful, purposeful work of the party committee played a big role. V.M. Ryabikov, the party activists succeeded in rousing the communists to fight shortcomings, to fulfill and overfulfill plan targets, to ensure that this became a matter of honor for every employee of the Bolshevik.

A turning point in the general mood of the team was made by the plant-wide party conference. It took place in the second half of April. It was a real party battle of laxity and mismanagement. disorganization, Frank, passionate, exacting conversation at the conference ~~re-examined~~ to the core. Once again ~~it was to be a battle with~~ wonderful, what wonderful people people, the plant can handle any task.

With these thoughts I came to Moscow. They did not leave me even for a moment during my report to the government. The report was sharply self-critical and at the same time balanced, reasoned, contained clear, in engineering language, calculated, based on a real assessment of forces and capabilities, answers to the most important questions related to the ongoing improvement of performance and further development of the plant. All this was the result of the collective work of many leaders, specialists, and ordinary workers of the Bolshevik, and I felt deep gratitude to my comrades for the assistance rendered.

In the decision of the government adopted on the report, a number of organizational and technical measures were identified, the implementation of which contributed to the accelerated improvement of production at Bolshevik. A major role in the mobilization of the communists to fulfill the tasks facing the

plant was played by the regional party conference, which took place in May. On it, I was elected a member of the Volodarsky district party committee of the city of Leningrad. The rise in labor activity, creative initiative was also facilitated by the Komsomol conference held at the plant, meetings of Stakhanovites, intellectuals, economic activists, as well as meetings of the management and factory assets on various issues of production activities.

An important help for us was the preparations for the anniversary of the plant, the 75th anniversary of its founding, which was unfolding at the same time. On this occasion, a solemn meeting was held at the end of May. It resulted in an exciting factory-wide holiday. We invited veterans of the plant to it - old Bolsheviks, participants in the Obukhov defense, the October Revolution and the Civil War, representatives of other Leningrad enterprises. The Party Committee instructed me to make a report.

In the report, special attention was paid to the disclosure of the tasks facing the factory team, the need to increase the glorious revolutionary and labor traditions of the older generations.

Excited speeches were made by a former locksmith - a member of the St. Petersburg Union of Struggle for the Liberation of the Worker, the founder of the revolutionary social democratic organization at the plant V.A. Shelgunov and the first red director of the Obukhov plant A.A. Antonov. Delegates of a number of enterprises from Leningrad and other cities of the country, the Leningrad City Party Committee, prominent figures of the Communist Party and the Soviet state congratulated the plant staff warmly. Greetings were sent to M.I. Kalinin, N.K. Krupskaya, E.M. Yaroslavsky.

The main thing that, in my opinion, enriched the anniversary celebrations of each of their participants is a clear sense of belonging to the glorious revolutionary past of the plant, an understanding of personal responsibility for the worthy continuation of its traditions.

Gradually, not immediately there were changes at the plant. From day to day indicators of sites, shops, departments improved. The Party Committee, the factory newspaper made sure that everyone knew about the concrete results achieved in the work, that confidence in their abilities was formed and strengthened in the team, that people felt and fell in love with the taste of labor victory, the joy of a job well done, and pride in their team. , site, workshop, plant. Together with V.M. Ryabikov, chief engineer L.R. Gonor, chief technologist

M.A. Minkov, other comrades, we searched, calculated that link in the production chain, which at the moment was the main, decisive one, for which, as V.I. Lenin, we must grasp with all our might in order to hold the entire chain and prepare firmly for the transition to the next link.

The first such link was the assembly of machines. Here, in fact, production threads from the entire plant converged, in fact, tied into a knot, and finished products came out from here. Truly assembly was a Gordian knot for us. The workshop worked irregularly, often rushed, and no private measures that we took gave the desired effect. Again and again we studied the organization of the production process in the workshop, the nature and degree of use of the capacities and resources available in it. Involved in solving the problems of improving the assembly, not only the leading specialists of the plant, the head of the shop V.F. Belov, his deputy Ya.V. Smirnov, but also economists, technologists, site managers, workers. And in the end they came to a common conclusion: a radical organizational and technological restructuring of the work of the shop is needed. In other words, the Gordian knot had to be cut.

We have decided to separate assembly from large-scale mechanical production. On the results of the work were negatively affected by the fact that they were combined in one workshop.

As the very first days and weeks of work in the new organization showed, such a step was fully justified. The causes of failures and malfunctions, the specific culprits for the short supply of components and parts, immediately became obvious. We got the opportunity to promptly and, most importantly, effectively influence the processes preceding assembly, and the assembly production itself. And when a special delivery site was completed for the assembly shop, the last, as we called them, internal interference in the assembly process were eliminated. At the same time, a number of other workshops were reconstructed,

the composition and structure of departments were revised and streamlined. In particular, the design bureau was also reorganized. Here the most rational form of organization was suggested by the chief designer of the plant I.I. Ivanov. Instead of one, we created two divisions with a specific profile - a serial design bureau (SKB) headed by G.N. Petukhov, whose duties were charged with working with serial products, and the design bureau (PKB) under the leadership of E.G. Rudyak - for the development of prototypes of machines. A specially created plant-wide commission brought the drawing facilities into the proper form. The chief designer was also subordinated to a special workshop created at the plant for the production of experimental work. This made it possible to radically change the previously existing state of

affairs, when experimental work was considered secondary in the shops, and even optional. For their lagging behind, they could simply scold and limit themselves to that.

A workshop of normal parts was created, which made it possible to effectively use in the development of new models of machines already mastered in production and tested in operation parts, assemblies, assemblies. Practice has confirmed the correctness of this step: the design time has been significantly reduced, and the reliability of products has increased. In just a year, we saved about a million rubles.

A lot of time and effort was taken from us by the construction of the CHP plant. She was needed, as they say, desperately. With its commissioning, the problems associated with the plant's energy, the creation of a reserve of production capacities and ensuring constant mobilization readiness were removed from the agenda. In addition to Bolshevik, a new thermal power plant

was supposed to provide for the needs of three more enterprises, as well as a residential area. In short, the construction was responsible. Organizations of several people's commissariats took part in it.

Constantly monitored the progress of the construction of the CHPP by the Leningrad regional committee and the city committee of the party. The city committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks even sent its representative, the party

organizer of the city party committee, to the construction site. With the approach of the deadline set by the government for the commissioning of the CHPP, the threat of its disruption became ever clearer. The execution of a number of works was delayed by one and a half to two months, and for reasons beyond our control. Once, after another visit to the construction site, I called A.A. Kuznetsov, secretary of the

city party committee. "Aleksey Alexandrovich, work at the CHPP has stalled again," I said and listed the materials, the lack of which forces builders and installers to stand idle. - In a number of positions, the city will assist the construction

site, - Kuznetsov answered. - But we are not gods, and we have limits and funds. We must, apparently, seriously raise the issue before Moscow. I'll get in touch with Vannikov right now. I'll let you know about the results later, Dmitry Fedorovich. But you, for your part, continue to look for how to help the construction site. In the evening of the same day, People's Commissar Boris Lvovich Vannikov called

me. "I received a telegram from Kuznetsov," he said after greeting. - Gorkom beats

anxiety, I think, not without your knowledge ...

"The situation is really serious," I replied. - I think that in the remaining time we will not be able to complete the task with the forces and means that the construction site has at its disposal.

- Fine. We have the intention to consider the issue of commissioning the CHPP at the board meeting. Prepare materials. Receive an invitation to the meeting.

The secretary of the party committee, the chief engineer, the head of the capital construction department and some other comrades were invited to the meeting of the collegium of the people's commissariat with me. The board examined in detail the causes of the threat of disruption of the timely commissioning of the CHPP, determined measures to eliminate them and complete the construction. In particular, it was decided, taking into account the special importance of the thermal power plant for the industry of Leningrad and the entire life of the city, to ask the Council of People's Commissars to increase the number of workers at the construction site by 600-700 people, to improve the supply of necessary materials. The request was granted. The CHPP was put into operation at the time stipulated by the government task. Chief power engineer of the plant N.A. Dubasov submitted to me for approval the draft

staffing table for the CHPP. The estimated number of service personnel was more than 400 people. After studying the project, I invited the chief power engineer.

- Nikolai Alekseevich, on the basis of what calculations were made in your department of the staff of the CHPP?

- We, Dmitry Fedorovich, proceeded from the need to ensure uninterrupted work. - And Dubasov began to explain at length the initial positions from which the department was repelled in the calculations.

Most of them were based either on outdated standards, or on arbitrary data taken by eye. I patiently listened to the chief power engineer, and then asked how many people serve a similar station in capitalist countries, such as the United States. He replied that he did not have such data. I asked him to work on the project more, to thoroughly calculate both the technical and economic feasibility of each staff unit, and at the same time study the experience of servicing power plants comparable in capacity to ours in the United States.

- So the same American, - objected Dubasov. - What about the American ones? In terms of technical level, our CHPP is in no way inferior to them. Well, let's see ... After some time, Nikolai Alekseevich

reported on the new staffing of the CHPP with a significantly smaller number of maintenance personnel, and also showed

the results of the study of this issue according to foreign experience and stations operating in our country. The

history of the CHP staffing once again showed me that not all is well at the plant with regard to the use of human resources. But the situation required special care for the most rational use of people. I drew the attention of all the leading employees of the plant, chief specialists, heads of departments and workshops to this. We reviewed the state of work with personnel at a meeting of the party committee. The personnel issue was also sharply raised at the plant-wide party meeting dedicated to the results

XVIII conference of the CPSU (b). A transcript of my speech at this meeting has been preserved. Let me quote a few lines from it concerning the unreasonable waste of labor power.

"D.F. Ustinov, director of the

plant: ... For a long time it has been the custom with us that as soon as you give the shop a new task, they immediately demand new people, insist on increasing staff ... We must strive to ensure that the staff of our socialist enterprises is not more, but less capitalist. We need to treat people especially carefully. This is the main wealth of our society. Everyone should work with the greatest return. How can he work like that, if he is taken on staff just in case, in reserve, but there is nothing for him to do? It's time to understand that extra workers at the enterprise do not improve, but worsen, disorganize the work. In parallel with the CHPP, we were building other production facilities,

in particular, the first plant automatic telephone exchange in Leningrad with a machine drive. As one of the main concerns, the management and the party committee of the plant considered the improvement of working and living conditions for the workers of Bolshevik. A canteen, a polyclinic, children's institutions, residential buildings - all this was built at an increasing pace, contributed to the retention of personnel at the plant, improved the mood of people, and had a beneficial effect on the growth of production indicators.

The activities carried out at the plant at the same time to improve the technological process played an important role in the rise in production. We concentrated our efforts on solving this problem immediately after the implementation of the main organizational changes, although preparatory work in this direction had been going on for a long time.

We needed a unified, comprehensively justified technology that takes into account the specific capabilities and features of our plant. She, in fact, was not. And this, no doubt, seriously influenced the entire production process, gave rise to many inconsistencies, and sometimes even contradictions.

The most qualified Bolshevik specialists were involved in the development of progressive technology. We did not hesitate to ask for help from Leningrad scientists, to borrow the experience of leading enterprises in the industry and the country. In fact, the newly created technical department at the plant has finally turned into what it should be - into a real headquarters of technical and technological thought. In a short time, the development of production technology for all the main types of products manufactured by the plant was completed. Thanks to the wide involvement of designers, innovators and inventors, the best Stakhanovite production workers, the most perfect, most economical, most promising methods and methods of work have found full use in technological processes.

We have received, figuratively speaking, a powerful lever for the general rise in production and for raising labor productivity. But was it possible to calm down on this? Of course not! It was necessary to solve at least two interrelated tasks. The first was to teach

people how to use this lever, to use it to the maximum advantage. To this end, meetings and seminars of specialists, talks and lectures, gatherings of Stakhanovites, the exchange of experience of the best specialists in the professions were held at the plant, the practical development of this experience was organized in brigades, at sites, in

workshops.

The Stakhanov schools were an effective form of transferring advanced experience. The initiator of the first of them, which became the first in Leningrad, was the Stakhanovite Mikhail Timofeevich Zykovsky. Having gathered about ten comrades who worked with him, he showed them methods of work, using which he exceeded the norm by three or four times. The activity was a great success. Engineer Spivak was instructed to technically substantiate the experience of the Stakhanovite and draw up a training program. She had six sessions. Their results showed up very quickly. Even those workers who previously could not meet the norm began to give 120-160 percent of the plan. Marriage has plummeted. Then we organized Stakhanov schools throughout the plant. I shared my experience of our work on

the pages of the Izvestia newspaper in the article "The Stakhanov School"⁶. It has become widespread in many enterprises of the country. Mastering advanced technology, increasing the efficiency of using time and equipment was also served by such a form of work as "photography" of the working day. Its essence was that in a certain area or in the workshop all the details of the organization of work during the shift were recorded. The results were then scrupulously analyzed and evaluated. This made it possible to identify shortcomings in the use of machine tools, tools, in the work, first of all, of the heads of workshops and sections, foremen, foremen, and promptly eliminate them. Wall printing, visual agitation, factory circulation and radio were actively involved in the matter.

In particular, in our large-circulation newspaper "Bolshevik" a permanent column was introduced: "The work of the Stakhanovites and shock workers." The newspaper regularly informed about the new labor achievements of the leading workers, placed their photographs. At the same time, she wrote boldly, in a party way, about the causes and culprits of shortcomings. It was always read with interest in workshops, departments, at construction sites, in all divisions of the plant, it also had an extensive worker's core. Bulletins, technical sheets, experience exchange cards were also systematically issued in workshops and departments ...

The measures we have taken to increase the effectiveness of socialist emulation have also had a good effect. Its results were summed up by the factory jury monthly and quarterly. And there was wide publicity. Various forms of moral and material incentives were actively used. The best workshop, for example, was awarded the challenge Red Banner, specially established by the directorate, the party committee, the factory committee and the Komsomol committee, and a cash prize was awarded to reward the most distinguished workers. An employee who won the title of the best foreman of a plant or workshop was awarded a diploma and a prize. Portraits of the leaders were placed on colorful stands. It also detailed their production achievements.

All this provided a counter movement for the introduction and development of advanced technology from above and

below. So we solved the first

problem. The second task was to ensure the universal and unconditional implementation of technological processes, the strictest observance of technological discipline. An order was issued for the plant, which regulated the production process, established the responsibility of officials and workers for meeting the requirements of the technology. Without the knowledge of the chief technologist, no one had the right to deviate from the approved technology, violate it. Strict local control was organized over the implementation of the order. This contributed to the better use of equipment and materials, putting things in order at all levels of production, and, ultimately, increasing labor productivity and the quality of products manufactured by the plant.

We did not see anything shameful in applying the best experience of others

⁶ See: Izvestia. 1938. 18 Sept.

production teams. Once an article was published in Pravda about the experience of the Kolomna people who organized a public review of equipment at the plant in order to improve its use. Discussed the initiative of Kolomna in the party committee, factory committee, committee of the Komsomol. We liked him.

We decided to hold a public review of the equipment on the Bolshevik as well. Created special so-called inspection teams. They included heads of workshops, foremen, technologists, and the best workers. They revealed the condition of machine tools, assemblies, machines, determined what needed repair and what. The attention of workshop teams was drawn to the culture of production, prudent attitude to the tool and its economical use. Preparations for the review and the review itself were covered in large circulation, wall newspapers, and its results were discussed at workshop, district and brigade meetings. We have systematized the materials of the inspection committee on a plant scale and outlined specific measures to eliminate the shortcomings. More than 2,000 proposals received during the review were implemented. This made it possible to eliminate many shortcomings and significantly increase production. I cannot fail to mention here the use of foreign

experience by us. To study it, by decision of the government, Soviet delegations left. One of them, who visited Czechoslovakia in the summer of 1938 in order to negotiate the possibility of ordering some types of equipment, was assigned to lead me. At that time, we were impressed, first of all, by the high culture of production, cleanliness on the territory of the plant and in the workshops, order in the storage of parts, tools, the strictest economy of electricity, materials and raw materials. We did not see any idlers at the factory. Everyone was busy. The telephone was widely used to resolve current issues. Of course, we understood that all this rests on cruel exploitation, on capitalist discipline - the discipline of fear and lack of rights of the

working man. But much that was instructive and useful for us could be gleaned and applied on our socialist basis as well. In particular, upon returning home, I proposed to reduce (of course, after appropriate calculations) the number of the plant's management staff by 20 percent. The Commissariat supported me. And this brought significant benefits to the production: the time for passing through various unnecessary instances of many documents was significantly reduced, and workshops and sites received a lot of qualified specialists who were released. Some other innovations were also implemented.

1938 was one of the busiest years for me, excluding, of course, the period of the Great Patriotic War. In the final order of the People's Commissariat, the production and technical activities of the Bolshevik plant for the year were assessed as good. By all indicators, the state plan was not only fulfilled, but also exceeded, sometimes significantly. This was a great victory for all of our

multi-thousand team.

And soon, on February 8, 1939, our plant was awarded the Order of Lenin. Orders and medals were awarded to a large group - 116 people - workers, engineering and management workers of the plant, including V.M. Ryabikov, L.R. Gonor, I.I. Ivanov and other comrades. I also received the highest award of the Motherland. This is my first and, probably, therefore, the award is especially memorable for me.

On February 9, when the decrees were published in the press, a rally took place. From the shops, from the factory management to the factory yard, where the figure of Ilyich towers, workers and specialists gathered. I read out the Decree on awarding the plant with the Order of Lenin. The news was greeted with thunderous applause. Then another Decree was announced - on awarding orders and medals to the workers of the plant. At the rally,

an old production worker, a Stakhanovite sculptor N.P. Povalyaev, who was awarded the Order of Lenin, the head of the workshop I.N. Kolmakov, awarded the Order of the Badge of Honor, secretary of the city party committee A.A. Kuznetsov and other comrades.

The awards ceremony took place two months later. It took place in Moscow

Sverdlovsk Hall of the Kremlin. The appearance of M.I. Kalinin was greeted with thunderous applause. Awards were presented on this day not only to us, but also to the soldiers. Symbolically: for the feat of arms and for labor. Major S.I. was the first to receive the Order of Lenin and the diploma of the Hero of the Soviet Union. Gritsevets. Then orders and medals were awarded to soldiers and commanders of the Red Army - participants in the battles near Lake Khasan and other servicemen who were awarded for success in combat and political training. After that, the Decree on awarding the Bolshevik plant was read out, and our delegation

received the order. Speaking on behalf of the plant staff, I said that the high appreciation of our work obliges the workers, engineering and technical workers and employees of Bolshevik to work even better, exemplarily fulfill all plans and tasks, thanked the party and the government and assured that we would carry the honorary title highly. order-bearing factory, tirelessly strengthen the power of the Motherland. The awards were also presented to the employees of the plant.

M.I. addressed the awardees with a short speech. Kalinin. Congratulating all the comrades who received orders and medals, he especially dwelled on the award that the Bolshevik was awarded. Wishing the plant further success, M.I. Kalinin urged us to multiply the glorious traditions, to master new technology, to achieve superiority in competition with other advanced factories.

The most expensive

The year 1939 was also significant for me in that I was elected a delegate to the 18th Congress party and participated in its work.

The congresses of our Party are of landmark significance in the life of every communist, every worker, in the life of the entire Soviet country. And it is no coincidence that a tradition was born in our people to meet them with labor victories and accomplishments. This tradition is beautiful, in my opinion, truly revolutionary. And the point is not only that, merging together, the labor victories and accomplishments of millions provide a new rise in the economy, science and technology, culture, strengthening the country's defense power and international prestige. It is also of inestimable importance that the preparation for the Party Congress, embracing virtually all working people, the entire people, gives life-giving impulses to the development and moral perfection of the personality of the Soviet person.

Long before the Report of the Central Committee of the Party is heard from the rostrum of the Congress, in all Party organizations and labor collectives there is a detailed discussion about affairs at the enterprise, in the institution, throughout the country. At the same time, each of the Communists, as it were, answers to himself, to his conscience: have I done everything that I could and should have done in my place, in my sector of popular work? Did he relate to the work that was entrusted to me, to his public duty, as required by the honor and dignity of a communist, a Soviet citizen? I am deeply convinced that such questions should be asked to ourselves constantly. And answer them honestly. What is the

use of lying to yourself? There are values in life that are never devalued or exchanged. It is generally accepted that life itself is the most precious thing for a person. I do not presume to dispute this judgment. But, I think, the meaning of this judgment is still that this life should be worthy. Is it by chance that folk wisdom claims that honor is more precious than life? Certainly not. A real person protects his honor really more than life. And if we are talking about the honor of the Motherland? How many faithful sons and daughters of the Soviet people gave their lives to prevent the enemy from trampling on this honor! We sacredly honor the bright memory of those who died fighting for their Motherland, who gave everything they could to the construction of the

majestic building of socialism. We have the deepest respect, gratitude and love for people who dedicate their knowledge, energy, strength to work for the good of their native country - whether it be creative or military

In other words, all my life.

And, perhaps, for the first time with special, one might say, the utmost clarity, I understood all this during the work of the congress, I felt an all-consuming concern for my native country, responsibility for its fate. This feeling arose from the very first minutes after I.V. Stalin, speaking at the congress with the Report of the Central Committee of the CPSU (b). His quiet, slightly muffled voice imperiously captured attention, and everything he said fit into the mind firmly, densely, almost weightily ...

About I.V. Much has been written about Stalin in fiction and memoirs. But interest in his personality does not weaken. And this is, in general, natural - after all, for a long period of time, including the incredibly difficult and difficult years of the war, Stalin served as General Secretary of the Party Central Committee, headed the Soviet government, and was chairman of the State Defense Committee.

I repeat, a lot has been written, sometimes with greater, sometimes with less certainty. It should be said that a complete and objective political assessment of the activities of I.V. Stalin was once given by the Central Committee of the CPSU in a special resolution. This assessment, based on a deep Marxist-Leninist analysis of the nature, essence and consequences of the personality cult, is well known, and I think there is no need to repeat it here.

After the 18th Party Congress, I happened to sit and hear I.V. Stalin, and later to work under his direct supervision for more than ten years, including the entire Great Patriotic War. Stalin enjoyed great prestige among the Soviet people. They knew him as an active fighter for the victory of socialism and trusted him.

In the prewar years, the party and the people were not aware of the facts of Stalin's gross violation of socialist legality. There was a conviction that the repressions carried out at that time were used against the real enemies of the people, in the interests of socialism. The Stalinist works of those years contained correct, Marxist-Leninist propositions about the people as the creator of history, about the role of the party and its Central Committee as a collective leader, about attention to cadres and their importance in building a new society, about party and Soviet democracy. But in practice, these provisions are sometimes violated. A gap appeared between word and deed in Stalin's activity. Some restrictions on democracy, inevitable in view of the fierce struggle against the class enemy and his agents, he raised to the standard of leadership of the party and the country.

Many violations were the result of negative character traits of I.V. Stalin, which V.I. Lenin. These phenomena, of course, caused serious damage to our common cause. But they did not change, and indeed could not change, the nature of the socialist social system, the political and organizational foundations of the party, its general line. Putting this line into practice, the Soviet people worked with inspiration and selflessness to strengthen the economic and defense might of their Motherland.

Running a little ahead, I will say that in the pre-war years the Party and the people carried out truly enormous creative work, the results of which, in fact, formed the material and spiritual basis for the defeat of the enemy in the Great Patriotic War. As for I.V. Stalin, I must say that it was

during the war that the negative traits of his character were weakened, and the strengths of his personality manifested themselves most fully. Stalin possessed a unique capacity for work, enormous willpower, and great organizational talent. Understanding the complexity and versatility of the issues of leading the war, he trusted the members of the Politburo of the Central Committee, the State Defense Committee, the leaders of the people's commissariats a lot, managed to establish an impeccably clear, coordinated, well-coordinated work of all levels of management, achieved the unconditional implementation of the decisions taken.

With all his authority, severity, I would say, rigidity, he vividly responded to the manifestation of reasonable initiative, independence, and valued independence of judgment. In

In any case, as far as I remember, as a rule, he did not forestall those present with his conclusion, assessment, or decision. Knowing the weight of his word, Stalin tried for the time being not to show any relation to the problem under discussion, most often he either sat as if aloof, or walked almost silently around the office, so that it seemed that he was very far from the subject of conversation, thinking about something of his own. And suddenly a short remark was heard, sometimes turning the conversation into a new and, as it often turned out later, the only true direction.

Sometimes Stalin interrupted the report with an unexpected question addressed to one of those present: "What do you think about this?" or "How do you feel about this proposal?". Moreover, the characteristic emphasis was placed precisely on the word "you". Stalin looked at the one he asked, intently and demandingly, never rushed to answer. At the same time, everyone knew that it was impossible to delay too much. It is necessary to answer not only on the merits, but also unambiguously. Stalin did not tolerate tricks and diplomatic tricks. And behind the question itself there has always been something more than just the expectation of this or that answer.

Often at meetings, during the discussion of acute problems, he referred to V.I. Lenin, more than once recommended that we turn to his works more often. Lenin's ideas underlie many of the most important decisions made by the State Defense Committee during the war years. The Leninist tone is clearly felt in a number of speeches by I.V. Stalin of the prewar and war years.

Apparently, it should also be mentioned that at the meetings and meetings held by I.V. Stalin, the discussion of issues and the adoption of decisions on them were often carried out without protocol records, and often without the corresponding formalization of decisions. It happened that one of the participants in a meeting or meeting was instructed to prepare proposals, revised taking into account the exchange of views that took place, and submit to
signature.

Possessing the richest, extremely tenacious and capacious memory, I.V. Stalin remembered in detail everything that was connected with the discussion, and did not allow any deviations from the essence of the decisions or assessments worked out. He knew by name almost all the leaders of the economy and the Armed Forces, up to the directors of factories and division commanders, he remembered the most significant data characterizing both them personally and the state of affairs in the areas entrusted to them. He had an analytical mind, capable of crystallizing the most important, essential things from a huge mass of data, information, facts. Stalin formulated his thoughts and decisions clearly, concisely, concisely, with inexorable logic. He did not like superfluous words and did not say them.

All this, of course, I learned, summarized, built, so to speak, in my mind the image of I.V. Stalin later, over time. And then, at the congress, like all the delegates, I listened with intense attention to Stalin, who said that the imperialist powers, trying to find a way out of the crisis, were striving to unleash a world war and direct its spearhead against the country of victorious socialism. By the spring of 1939, countries with a population of

about half a billion people were drawn into the war. To intensify the struggle to prevent a world conflagration, to expose its instigators, to support in every possible way the resistance of the peoples who are under the threat of imperialist enslavement, to strengthen business ties with peace-loving countries, to prevent the provocateurs of war from dragging the USSR into a conflict - for these directives in the field of foreign policy, we, the Congress delegates, voted passionately and unanimously. A storm of applause in the conference hall was caused

by the announcement from the rostrum of the congress that, having built socialism in the main, the Soviet Union had entered the phase of completing the construction of a socialist society. At the congress, the question was raised about the main economic task of the USSR - to catch up and overtake the main capitalist countries in per capita output. The Third Five-Year Plan that we have considered provided for strengthening the industrial might of the state, strengthening the collective-farm system, raising the material and cultural level of the people, and strengthening the country's defense capability.

Special emphasis was placed by the congress on the need for the accelerated development of the defense industry, the creation of large state reserves for the fuel and energy and other sectors of the economy. In addition, plans were made for the comprehensive development of the main economic regions of the country, the creation of backup enterprises in the Urals, the Volga region, Siberia and Central Asia. Much attention was paid to expanding the coal and metallurgical base in the East, the oil base between the Volga and the Urals, and the grain base in the eastern and southeastern regions of the Soviet Union.

With a complex feeling of inspiration and concern, I returned from the congress to my factory. The prospects for creation opened up by the congress could not but rejoice, they called for shock work. But the anxious thought did not recede for a minute: will we succeed, will we do everything that we have planned, will we forestall the

war that is approaching us? An impatient desire to quickly get down to business grew in my soul. Yes, and for two weeks of absence, I simply missed my native plant. And although I contacted Leningrad almost daily by phone, found out how things were going, resolved certain issues, I was still in a hurry to quickly look at everything with my own eyes. It is rightly said that it is better to see once than to hear a hundred times.

From the very beginning of my directorship, I made it a rule to start my working day with a tour of the shops. At first, I usually made such a detour without a preliminary plan, without including in it the so-called target problems that I had to study personally. But he soon became convinced that if you plan on the eve of what to focus on, then the efficiency of the bypass increases dramatically. And then questions emerged that required my direct participation in their solution. Thus, I could more quickly influence the production process, take timely and effective measures to eliminate omissions and shortcomings.

This is from an organizational and technical point of view. And there is no need to talk about the social, political and educational side of the matter. The rounds allowed me to become closely acquainted with an ever wider range of plant workers - not only production commanders at all levels, but, which is very important, also those who are called privates. Getting to know each other means getting to know moods, requests, needs, claims, grievances, many issues are resolved right there, on the spot. And this is very, very important for the moral climate, and indeed for the health of the team.

Of course, this kind of detours require - especially if we have in mind large enterprises like Bolshevik or similar enterprises - considerable expenditures of time, physical strength, and spiritual energy. But without them, it is difficult to imagine a leader who truly knows deeply, comprehensively, to the subtleties of the production entrusted to him and really manages it. The form of the tour, its content, and the place in the working day of the director may be different, but I have always considered personal communication with production to be mandatory.

If we are already talking about some aspects of the diverse director's work, I cannot but mention one more, very important, in my opinion, moment, which I firmly learned at Bolshevik. I mean the obligation of each, I emphasize, each leader to independently and responsibly resolve all issues related to his competence, which are his prerogative. What did I encounter when I became the director of Bolshevik? Many heads of

workshops, departments and services of the plant sought to obtain instructions, permission or approval personally from the director on any issue. Most often, there was objectively no need for the participation of the director, the issue could well be resolved either by the "applicant" himself or his closest, immediate superior.

To put an end to this practice, after careful preparation, we held a series of special production meetings dedicated to this side of the style of our work. And what? The case just won. Increasing the independence and responsibility of officials contributed to the growth of leadership efficiency, its objectivity and, therefore, efficiency, the development of initiative, efficiency. Well, how not to remember here

Lenin's words that responsibility cannot be nameless, that it is always personal? Behind every fact of disorganization or laxity, negligence or conservatism, there are specific individuals. They must be in demand. Of no small importance was the "anti-bureaucratic effect" obtained as a result of streamlining the solution of current issues,

when practically none of these issues was shelved. A more rational organization of the work and spending of the time of managers, starting with the foreman, foreman, shop manager and ending with the director, contributed to the elimination of their overload with administrative functions, helped to switch their professional, organizational, educational talent to the main provision of high-performance, high-quality work in the areas assigned to them. One of the indispensable conditions for the successful fulfillment of the demand of the 18th Party Congress to raise the level of management consisted in streamlining the work of all links in the management of the production process, increasing the responsibility and independence of the commanding personnel of the plant - and we were clearly convinced of this. As the congress emphasized, first of all, the fulfillment of the Third Five-Year

plan.

It was perfectly clear to all of us that raising the level of economic management was not an end in itself. The profitability of the enterprise directly depends on what this level is. And one of the radical ways to increase profitability is cost accounting. This method was new for us, and we decided to test it first in one of the workshops of the plant. The choice fell on the metallurgical shop, where the most competent and energetic manager was selected.

compound.

Three months of work of the metallurgical shop on self-supporting basis gave us a very demonstrative experience. We comprehensively analyzed, summarized it and held a meeting of the plant's economic asset.

In my report on the active, I drew the attention of the meeting participants to the fact that so far we have not dealt with the economy in the full sense of the word, we were only interested in quantitative indicators. The heads of shops and other executives of the plant did not know how much the products they produced cost and what elements make up its cost. They only knew that in such and such a time it was necessary to produce so many cars. And at what price they were produced, what is their cost, how the costs and results of production are commensurate - little attention was paid to this. We can say that we worked one-sidedly, and now this one-sidedness had to be overcome. What did the experience of the metallurgical shop work on self-financing show? I brought

a few typical examples.

First of all, the head of the workshop Ya.S. Rubinstein asked the commercial part to stop the sale of non-ferrous metal waste. Before the introduction of self-financing, he, like other heads of shops, resolutely refused to use them. We sold this waste to the side. Now he decided to use them for himself. Previously, the shop worked on pig iron, but now it uses scrap. Direct savings for the factory. The use of standard zinc instead of electrolytic resulted in savings of 200 rubles per ton.

Before the transition to self-financing, the head of the shop asked for an increase in the number of workers. And after the approval of the provision on self-financing, he came to me and declared that he not only refused what he asked for, but also would give a few more people, since he would get along with a smaller number of people. Self-financing had other positive aspects as well. The

workshop completed the annual program by December 25. The cost of production decreased by 6 percent. People were even more drawn to study, more and more often they acted as innovators. The whole shop became actually Stakhanovite. In general, for three months of work on self-financing, the workshop saved more than 300 thousand rubles.

Based on this experience, in the second half of the year, self-financing was gradually almost all the shops of the plant were transferred.

Cost accounting has become an important means of combating mismanagement and increasing the efficiency of the use of labor, material and financial resources. In connection with its introduction, the role of guild economists, planners, and everyone who was directly involved in economics and planning, rose significantly. There was a need to increase the level of economic knowledge of the heads of shops, departments, services. At the initiative of the party committee, the entire management of the plant was trained in short-term courses in the economics of production. The program of these courses had a practical orientation. The study of theory was closely linked with the economic activity of the enterprise, with the specific tasks of the shops and the plant as a whole.

The work in a new way literally transformed the appearance of the plant. This was manifested in many, perhaps sometimes outwardly invisible, especially to the outside eye, features - in the rhythm of production processes, in the promptness of resolving issues that previously seemed insoluble, in the relationship of workers.

You can't list everything, but it's probably not necessary. But about one feature that seems to me especially indicative from the point of view of a sharp turn in people's attitude to business, a turn towards an interested, truly masterly approach, I still want to say in more detail. I mean the sharp rise in rationalization and inventive work at the plant. I already mentioned it, talking about the metallurgical

shop. Now, when the experience of the workshop began to spread throughout the plant, technical creativity has acquired a wider scale. This movement had to be directed in a direction that would be determined by the fundamental, long-term interests of the plant. There was a need to improve the organization of invention and rationalization. After an in-depth study of the issue in the leading divisions of the plant management, in

the party committee, in the shops and at the sites on the Bolshevik, for the first time a general plant collection was created, which listed the main topics for rationalization and invention, and determined the most relevant and promising areas of creative search. Previously, the list of thematic tasks was limited to the workshops, but life suggested that it would be better to have it in common for the

entire plant. In this case, enthusiasts - craftsmen from other workshops and departments could be involved in solving the production problems of one workshop and really made their creative contribution. In addition, the plant has become a practice of systematically holding competitions to solve complex technical problems, meetings and

conferences of innovators and inventors. The promotion of their achievements has improved. As a result, the economic effect from the introduction of rationalization proposals more than doubled over the three pre-war years. Moreover, some of

our innovations, such as, for example, the welding of large units, which were previously manufactured by riveting, were widely used in the metallurgy and machine building of the country, especially during the war years. Many large enterprises of the country have mastered and developed a group of metallurgical engineers "Bolshevik" - A.I. Antonov, F.L. Kupriyanov (by the way,

he successfully managed one of the largest research institutes for more than 30 years), G.M. Khayutin and others - a new technology of the open-hearth process for the production of steel with a lower content of acutely scarce ferroalloys while maintaining and even improving its quality. This gave the plant 4 million rubles of savings per year. Is it necessary to speak of the importance of this innovation, especially in anticipation of a possible war?

I remember with regret that, despite the fact that this innovation was significant, I, as the director of the plant, could not give due credit to its authors. The fact is that the independence of enterprise managers in solving a number of issues, including

the expenditure of funds to encourage the most talented and valuable people for production was then too limited. The petty guardianship of the director by the head offices and people's commissariats did not help, but, on the contrary, complicated his practical work.

About this, about the need to increase the independence of enterprises, to expand the rights of their leaders, we, together with the directors of some other Leningrad enterprises, wrote to Pravda. The article "On unity of command and the rights of the director" was published in the order of discussion⁷. A number of responses appeared to it, including N.A. Tikhonov - then and. O. Director of the Lenin Pipe Plant in Dnepropetrovsk, and later Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR⁸. Unfortunately, the full practical Our proposals were not implemented at that time.

I think the reader understands that everything that happened at that time on the Bolshevik in one way or another reflects the processes characteristic of the entire economy of the country, for the entire Soviet society. And if I speak mainly about my plant and its people, it is only because it was with them that my whole life was inseparably

connected at that time. The Bolshevik, like our entire economy, was, in fact, taking the first steps towards the intensification of production. This was a natural continuation of the previous path that our national economy followed in the early stages of its development, when we had to put the growth of quantitative indicators in the first place, build plants and factories on an often outdated technical base in order to create more and more new jobs, to involve in production of more people. With the victory of socialism, when the productive forces of society have reached a qualitatively new level, the time has come to achieve high production results through a more rational use of existing material and labor resources, on the basis of technical reconstruction and the introduction of advanced technology. Such work was demanded from us by the interests of the Motherland, which

continued to be complicated
foreign policy situation - the situation on the eve of the war.

First Commandment

Yes, the war was on the threshold of our common home - the Soviet country. The events of 1939 fully confirmed the assessment of the international situation made by the 18th Party

Congress. We learned with bitterness and indignation about the capture of Czechoslovakia by the Nazis. It was a direct consequence of the "Munich policy" of the Western powers - the policy of betraying the interests of the peoples, aiding the aggressor. Czechoslovakia had every opportunity to defend its independence, and we Soviet people were ready to render all possible support to the Czechoslovak people. But the bourgeois government of this country, under pressure from the Western powers, capitulated, renouncing the resistance of fascist Germany.

It happened in March. Moreover, Hitler's Germany went on aggression with the tacit consent of England and France. Moreover, having done away with Czechoslovakia, she immediately set about preparing aggression against Poland. It became clear that the Western powers failed at the price of the Munich betrayal to come to terms with Hitler and protect their interests from his encroachment. And then England and France announced the provision of a guarantee of state independence to Poland, Greece, Romania, Turkey, which were threatened by fascist Germany. At the same time, they began negotiations with the Soviet Union on ways to counter the aggression.

⁷ See: Truth. 1940. 10 Sept.

⁸ See: Ibid. 23 Sept.

We followed these talks in Moscow with tense attention, wholeheartedly approved of the persistence with which the representatives of our country sought to conclude a treaty of mutual assistance with Britain and France against the bloc of fascist states. Each of us understood that we should not miss the slightest opportunity to organize a collective rebuff to the aggressor and prevent a new world war. Of course, we were outraged by the ever new, often clumsy tricks of the representatives of Britain and France, who dragged out the negotiations in every possible way, put forward completely unacceptable proposals that did not meet the principle of reciprocity, actually calculated to provoke a Soviet-German war. But it was necessary to gain restraint and patience, because it was a question of too high a stake - about the security of peoples, about peace ... The negotiations dragged on. Spring has passed. The summer was coming

to an end. In August, at the initiative of the Soviet Union, a meeting of military representatives of the USSR, Britain and France was held in Moscow. It was then that it finally became clear that the reactionary governments of Britain and France did not at all think of taking up arms with the USSR against fascist aggression, that they needed not an agreement with us, but talk about an agreement for the sake of some other, apparently, purely selfish purposes.

What these goals were, was revealed in detail by many documents that became known after the Second World War. Truly there is no limit to the hypocrisy of the imperialists! Just think: using the Moscow talks to deceive the democratic public, which demanded that the governments of the Western powers establish close cooperation with the Soviet Union, and at the same time to put pressure on fascist Germany, England and France behind the back of the USSR from May to the end of August - that is, simultaneously with Moscow negotiations - negotiated with Berlin. About what? England, for example, expressed its readiness to stop negotiations with the USSR, renounce guarantees given by it to Poland and other countries, and even sacrifice the interests of its closest ally France, share spheres of influence in the world with Germany, including at the expense of the USSR. The Western powers by all means made

it clear to fascist Germany that the USSR had no allies, they pushed her to war against us. At the same time, the United States and Britain encouraged the Japanese militarists in every possible way, trying to give their expansion an anti-Soviet orientation. The provocation in the area of Lake Khasan, and then the aggression on the Khalkhin Gol River against the Mongolian People's Republic, with which we were connected by a protocol of mutual assistance, were direct attempts by world imperialism to probe the combat power of the socialist state with a Japanese bayonet, its readiness to repulse aggression.

The situation was extremely dangerous for us. The Soviet Union was threatened with a war on two fronts at the same time - in the West and in the Far East, and we would have to wage it in conditions of complete political isolation. Such a situation had to be avoided, avoided at all costs, to thwart the plans of the imperialists, to delay, as far as possible, their attack on the USSR. Finally convinced of the unwillingness

of England, France and Poland to conclude an agreement with the Soviet Union on a joint struggle against Hitler's aggression and having exhausted all other possibilities for ensuring the security of our country, the party and government in August 1939 decided to agree with Germany's proposals to conclude a non-aggression pact with it.

Life has confirmed how timely and far-sighted this responsible step was. In those days our treaty with Germany was on everyone's lips. I often had to meet and talk with workers, shop managers. Whatever was discussed, people in one way or another concerned the situation in the world, the military danger. We talked about the same at meetings of the party committee, and in the Volodarsky district committee of the party, and in Smolny, where I often visited on factory business. I must say that most of the workers, and engineers, and party workers did not believe that Germany would

comply with the contract concluded with us. The proletarian class instinct, and indeed the entire international practice of recent years, suggested that this could not be counted on. But was it really possible to refuse the opportunity to push the attack further away, to buy time to strengthen one's defenses? Such a win just gave us the contract. The impending danger rallied people. Small, minor faded into

the background. Everyone understood that the main thing now is to work even more persistently, even better. We all realized ourselves as a single family, which is in danger of trouble, and such that it can only be overcome by the whole world. Visiting factories, institutions, meeting with voters, veterans

of the Party and the Armed Forces, participating in celebrations on the occasion of awarding cities, I always willingly talked to people. Women and men, gray-haired veterans who have passed through the fire of military trials, and young people who know about them only from the words of their elders from books and films - all of them, just like decades ago, spoke as the most important thing: "We will do everything we will overcome everything, if only there was no war!" The task of preventing war, curbing aggressors and maintaining peace is incredibly

difficult. But now it is quite real, because the world has such a powerful support as the USSR and other socialist countries, and the progressive, peace-loving forces of the entire planet are actively participating in the anti-imperialist struggle along with them.

And then, in the 30s, the Soviet Union was essentially alone. It was surrounded by capitalist states. The international working class, split by right-wing socialists, could not offer sufficient effective resistance to the forces of aggression and war. That is why the task of preventing war and maintaining peace, despite all the efforts of the USSR, unfortunately turned out to be insoluble.

On September 1, 1939, we learned that Germany had invaded Poland, two days later England and France declared war on Germany. But this was not dictated by the desire to help the victim of aggression, but was another demonstration of great-power ambitions. This is how imperialism plunged

humanity into the Second World War. Who doesn't know the feeling of speeding up time? Minutes, hours, days - those same minutes, hours and days that stretch endlessly during the waiting period - are compressed when time is short, when there is not enough of it, and you need to do a lot of urgent, vital things. This is the feeling we constantly experienced on the eve of the war. So much we had to do, and so little - we did not know how much, but we understood that very little - time remained.

It was bitter to realize that while the British and French troops were inactive on the Western Front, the Nazis were rapidly moving east across Poland, approaching the borders of the USSR. It was necessary to stop them, to prevent the Nazis from enslaving the fraternal population of Western Ukraine and Western Belarus. We on the Bolshevik warmly welcomed the liberation campaign of the Red Army that began in September 1939. The news of the reunification of the Ukrainian and Belarusian peoples with their brothers from the western regions caused general rejoicing in the country.

The end of the year was also difficult. The imperialists succeeded in provoking the Finnish reactionaries to go to war against the USSR. Leningrad has turned, in essence, into a front-line city. The strictest blackout was introduced, and the air defense of facilities was strengthened. The work of Leningraders to assist the front was headed by the regional committee and the city committee of the party. All issues related to this work were directly dealt with by A.A. Zhdanov. Once, at a rather late time,

they found me in one of the workshops of the plant and handed over the request to A.A. Zhdanov to visit him at the headquarters of the Leningrad Military District. Subsequently, I learned that Andrey Aleksandrovich met with the directors of the Kirov Plant, the Voroshilov Plant and other enterprises there, and then, I remember,

I was surprised: why all of a sudden to the headquarters?

My bewilderment dissipated immediately as soon as I entered the office where A.A. Zhdanov. On the wall hung a large map with detailed furnishings, another, smaller one, lay on a long table that divided the office in half. Here, at the headquarters, it was possible to obtain information in the shortest possible time and reflect on the map the slightest changes in the situation at the front, reports flocked here, and communication with the troops was carried out from here. That is why Zhdanov settled here as a member of the military council of the district. After saying hello, Andrey Alexandrovich invited me to the map. "On the

Karelian Isthmus, our troops, with the support of aviation and the fleet, advanced about 65 kilometers and reached the Mannerheim Line," he said. "But we didn't manage to break through it on the move. In particular, unforeseen difficulties were encountered with the destruction of the fortifications. I think you, Dmitry Fyodorovich, should go to the front in the near future. It is necessary to look on the spot and consult with military comrades, how the plant could help in this matter. Take two or three engineers with you. Just dress warmly. Early the next morning, Evgeny Georgievich Rudyak and I, who quite recently replaced I.I. Ivanov as chief designer, and design engineer Georgy Pavlovich Volosatov drove to the front by car. E.G. Rudyak and G.P. I

knew Volosatov well and respected them as excellent specialists, deeply decent and hardworking people. Evgeny Georgievich graduated from the military-mechanical institute two years earlier than me, and in seven years of work at the plant he proved himself to be a thoughtful, energetic engineer,

and a skilled organizer. In subsequent years, he did a lot to defeat the enemy in the Great Patriotic War, to strengthen the power of our country. He became a Hero of Socialist Labor, a laureate of the Lenin and State Prizes, a doctor of technical sciences, and a professor. The fate of Georgy Pavlovich Volosatov was not easy. He grew up without parents - first as a homeless child, then in an orphanage. He graduated from the school of factory training, a workers' faculty, and in 1934 he received a diploma with honors from the Leningrad Military Mechanical Institute. A man of strong labor leaven, he performed any work reliably. It was to him, as one of the most trained engineers, who had a deeply party-like, responsible approach to

business, that I handed over the Bolshevik a little more than a year later. Georgy Pavlovich successfully managed the plant and subsequently headed one of the main departments of the People's Commissariat for Armaments. At the wheel of the car in which we went to the front was Nikolai Ivanovich Bystrov, a driver, as they say, by vocation. By the way, I traveled with him throughout the Great Patriotic War and several years after the Victory. He drove the car, as always, skillfully, overcoming snowdrifts one after another. About two hours later we drove up to a large column frozen by the roadside. We found out that there has been no movement for a long time: there is a traffic jam ahead. It was impossible to bypass the column - the road was too narrow. I had to go to her head on foot.

The traffic jam was created by two trucks that sat in the snow and blocked the road. Several people were bustling around here. I stopped one of them and asked who was in charge here. It turned out that it was him. I ordered him to immediately collect people from the nearest cars. It can be seen that my firm voice, which does not tolerate objections, and the clothes - I was wearing a white coat, felt boots, a hat with earflaps - had an effect. In any case, after a few minutes people were gathered. The stuck trucks were pushed to the side of the road, and the convoy moved on. In the combat area, we were met by representatives of the headquarters and escorted to

the commander - commander of the 2nd rank K.A. Meretskoy. There was also a member of the military council of the army, the second secretary of the Leningrad regional committee of the CPSU (b) T.F. Shtykov, other comrades. We were escorted to the front. One of the commanders showed the Finns pillboxes through the stereo tube and explained that they were made of very durable concrete, which light artillery does not take. In addition, in many pillboxes, combat casemates from the side of the embrasures are covered with armored

slabs in several layers, and reinforced concrete walls have a thickness of one and a half to two meters and are additionally covered with a two-three-meter layer of compacted soil. Therefore, it is possible to silence the pillboxes only with the fire of large-caliber guns, and direct fire. But it is very difficult to deliver them to firing positions for such shooting. - Is it possible to think of

something to increase the patency of the guns? Meretskov asked. - We also need special concrete-piercing shells. The front order was completed in a short time. Our

gunners got the opportunity to pull up heavy guns closer to the front line. The destructive power of ammunition has also increased. Now even the strongest fortifications of the enemy were not able to withstand the blows of our guns ... Neither the active supply of weapons from England and France, nor the hidden help of Nazi Germany could save the White Finns

from defeat. The plans of the Anglo-French imperialists were frustrated. In March 1940, a peace treaty between the USSR and Finland was signed in Moscow. And the flywheel of war, hyped by imperialism, continued to gain momentum. April - Hitler's army captured Denmark and Norway, Yugoslavia and Greece. May - Holland

and Belgium are occupied. June - France surrenders. From the very beginning of the Second World War, the ruling circles of the Western powers sought to involve in an armed conflict with the USSR the border states with us - primarily Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. The intrigues

of the imperialists aroused such a storm of indignation in these countries that their governments were compelled in the autumn of 1939 to conclude treaties of mutual assistance with the Soviet Union. However, even after this, the danger of the Baltic countries being drawn into anti-Soviet imperialist adventures remained. Then the working people of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania demanded the immediate restoration of Soviet power in their countries and reunification with the USSR. It is difficult to convey with what tense attention we followed the developments in the Baltics. There the fate of our brothers in the class was decided, and we could not be indifferent to it. In general, it was precisely in the difficult pre-war years that I, perhaps, for the first

time with such clarity saw in action the deep internationalism of the Soviet people - one of the main sources of the irresistible strength of our country. With joy, the Bolshevik was greeted with the news that in Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania, power had passed into the hands of progressive forces. The newly elected parliaments of these countries appealed to the Soviet state for admission to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. In August 1940, this request

was granted. Bessarabia, forcibly torn away from the Soviet Republic in 1918, and Northern Bukovina were also reunited with the USSR. All this gave us deep satisfaction. We understood that the reunification of the fraternal republics and peoples deprives the enemy of the opportunity to use the territories located in the west as a base of aggression. This was especially important, given that in the second half of 1940, fascist Germany, as it became known later, began direct preparations for an attack on the USSR. From the party

and the people, from every Soviet person, even more strenuous work was required to strengthen the country's defense capability. The task of strengthening organization and discipline came to the fore. In line with her decision in June 1940, a transition was made to an eight-hour working day and a seven-day working week. It was forbidden for workers and employees to leave enterprises and institutions without permission. More stringent measures were envisaged for violators of labor discipline. On July 10, 1940, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR adopted the Decree "On liability for the production of low-quality products and for non-compliance with mandatory standards by industrial enterprises." It was aimed at improving the management of production, strengthening technological discipline.

For a clearer organization of the fulfillment of the requirements of the party on the "Bolshevik" was

a meeting of heads of workshops and departments, heads of party, trade union and Komsomol organizations of the plant was held together with representatives of the customer. We tried to convey the decisions and recommendations made at the meeting to each person, backed them up with concrete and purposeful work in the workshops and other production areas. Emphasis was placed on increasing people's sense of responsibility, on fighting arrogance and complacency.

In the context of the growing danger of war, the immediate solution of the question of the training of skilled workers was of great importance. And, of course, not only for the plant, but for our entire industry, primarily the defense industry. The need for skilled workers grew. It was necessary to ensure the most complete development of the production capacities of existing enterprises. It was also necessary to organize the production of products at new enterprises. In the eastern regions

of the country - in the Volga region and the Urals, in Western and Eastern Siberia, in Central Asia and the Far East - industrial giants grew. Between the Volga and the Urals, a new oil base was created - the second Baku. Magnitogorsk was expanding, the construction of the Nizhny Tagil Metallurgical Plant was being completed. In Transbaikalia, the Petrovsk-Zabaikalsky Metallurgical Plant was raised, and in the Far East - Amurstal. Understudy enterprises in all leading industries were put into operation. The replenishment of the working class was well served by the system of state labor reserves created in the prewar years in the USSR. Young people who graduated from vocational schools and factory training schools replenished the cadre of skilled workers.

I can't say enough about women. About their feat in the Great Patriotic War, a special word. But already in the pre-war period, they took on their shoulders a significant share of the concerns about the implementation of production plans. For example, at our Bolshevik, in many shops, in many traditionally "male" sections, female workers worked. And they worked successfully. They mastered new professions, mastered modern technology and ensured a growing production rhythm. And so it was throughout the country - by the beginning of 1940, women accounted for 41 percent of workers and employees.

Needless to say, how important this was at a time when major measures were being taken to strengthen and deploy the Armed Forces! Yesterday's artisans and graduates of factory training schools, women replaced in the production of men called up for military service. The deployment of the Armed Forces - by June 1941, their number had been increased almost three times compared to 1939 and exceeded 5 million people - required a lot of people. And the war that was approaching would demand, we all understood this well, even more. We saw an important reserve for increasing production at our

plant in raising the technical culture of all categories of workers. First of all, it was necessary to improve the quality of vocational training. We took care of the selection of teachers, strengthened the educational and material base of various courses, and took measures to disseminate the best methodological experience. The task was set at the forefront: both teachers and trainees should be interested in achieving the best results in the shortest possible time. Courses for masters of socialist labor successfully operated at the Bolshevik. Their

program was designed for three years and included, in addition to special subjects, general education in the amount of 7-9 grades of secondary school. This made the courses particularly attractive to young people.

We strictly ensured that course graduates were appointed to positions that corresponded to their knowledge and qualifications, from foreman to section chief. And for excellent students, an additional one and a half to two years of study was organized according to the program of the technical school, after which the worker was awarded the title of technician. Along with these forms of study, one-year courses functioned at the plant.

Stakhanovites, technical minimum courses, brigade apprenticeship, advanced training courses for engineering and technical workers.

We attached particular importance to the preparation of two main categories of factory command staff - heads of shops and foremen. The

shop manager is one of the most important figures in the production process. It has a huge, diverse guild economy. He is responsible for the organization of work, for the implementation of the production plan and its quality. The workshop is not only machines, mechanisms, equipment, raw materials, materials. These are people - workers, foremen, foremen, process engineers, designers, economists, and other specialists. These are party, trade union, Komsomol organizations. And if the head of the workshop, as a one-man leader, skillfully organizes and directs the overall work, then high production indicators are achieved, and a healthy moral climate is established in the team. If not, the shop is in a fever in all directions.

That is why we spared no effort or time for the training and education of the heads of workshops. Engineers who had proven themselves in practical work were boldly nominated for these positions. Here is what, in particular, was said about the heads of workshops in the already mentioned article published in Izvestia on September 18, 1938.

"Our commanders are mostly young nominees. All of them are good production workers, advanced social activists, closely connected with the masses, having grown out of their environment. Studying and checking people on their deeds, before we nominate this or that employee to a managerial position, we consult the public about this ...

Take engineer Shifrin. Being promoted to the leadership of one of the most important workshops of the plant, he resolutely took up the introduction of culture into production. Tov. Shifrin brought the daily plan to each worker, put things in order in the tool economy, and made a number of changes to the organization of production. Recently Comrade. Shifrin was nominated for the position of head of the production department. Engineer Kolmakov was entrusted with the leadership of the 38th shop. In a short time, he managed to rally the workers in the workshop into a single, tightly knit team and achieve great production success. The workshop began to fulfill not only the orders of the plant, but also overfulfill the orders of enterprises cooperating with us. Tov. Kolmakov managed to reduce marriage by half compared to last year. There is not a single worker in this shop who does not fulfill the norm. 90 percent of all pieceworkers Stakhanovites."

The experience, techniques and methods of work of the most active, well-versed shop managers were introduced into factory practice. There were many such leaders at the Bolshevik. V.F. Belov, A.P. Zolotarev, A.I. Ivanov, A.I. Morozensky, Ya.V. Smirnov, K.I. Tritko and other heads of shops.

Most of them started their careers as workers. As a rule, they received secondary and higher technical education on the job. These people wholeheartedly rooted for the workshop, were not only by position, but also by business, moral authority at the center of life and activities of the teams they headed. And it is quite natural that many of them were subsequently promoted to responsible positions, successfully worked as chief engineers, plant directors during the Great Patriotic War. On the eve of the war, we succeeded in significantly strengthening the composition of the heads of

workshops of this most important link in the production chain, increasing their independence and responsibility. And the results were not long in coming: most of the workshops began to meet and exceed planned targets, including in terms of quality and reduction in product costs. Naturally, the general mode of operation of the entire plant was also streamlined.

As for the foremen, they, as the very first, closest to the workers, commanders of production, form, in my opinion, the basis of the foundations of its organization. Before

the stability of technology, the rhythm of production, the quality of products, and the observance of the nomenclature depend on them. The position of a foreman is troublesome, requiring from a person not only deep and solid engineering knowledge, but also great endurance, tact, goodwill in relations with people. The manifold duties of a craftsman can be adequately handled only by a person who has both solid professional training and high moral qualities. In November 1940, the people's commissariat issued an order to

increase the role of the master. In accordance with this order, the foreman was entrusted with the management of the production site entrusted to him and full responsibility for the fulfillment of tasks in all respects. Issues of the subordination of masters were streamlined, their rights and obligations were specified, and broad measures of moral and material incentives were provided.

We saw the basis of all work with masters in their correct selection, placement, training and education. Focusing on these issues, we tried, first of all, to free the craftsmen from their unusual duties of knocking out materials, component parts, etc., from clerical fuss, excessive correspondence. The optimal placement of workers and the rational loading of equipment, the development of advanced labor methods, ensuring the high-quality and timely implementation of tasks and plans at their production site - these are the main duties of the foreman.

So the question was raised in our factory. And we have done everything to ensure that it is solved in practice in this vein. Socialist emulation played an important role in strengthening the prestige of craftsmen and raising the prestige of their difficult positions. Quarterly, authoritative shop jury summed up the results of the competition, and the plant-wide jury awarded the title of the best foreman of the plant or shop with the issuance of an appropriate cash prize. People awarded this title enjoyed great respect in the team. Among them at that time were such remarkable leaders as the foreman of the milling section Vladimir Vasilyevich Koreshev, the foreman of the large-press section of the hammer shop Grigory Pavlovich Pavlov, the foreman of the mechanical repair shop Anatoly Ivanovich Gerasimov, and other comrades.

Somewhat anticipating the events, I will say that the experience of Bolshevik in strengthening the "echelon" of masters - the most numerous in the command structure of production later, during the Great Patriotic War, was widely used in organizing production at the enterprises of the People's Commissariat of Arms and played an important role in ensuring the successful implementation wartime assignments. Then, in the pre-war year, our plant significantly exceeded the production program, which was significantly increased compared to 1939. The cost of production was significantly reduced. The state received several tens of millions of rubles in profit. The "Bolshevik" was presented with the challenge Red Banner of the People's Commissariat and the Central Committee of the Trade Union. We also received the first award from the people's commissariat. The success of our plant reflected the general rise in production in the c

The growing military threat to the USSR forced our party and government to switch an increasing number of enterprises of the national economy to the production of defense products. In particular, more than half of the plants of the People's Commissariat of Heavy Engineering were switched to it. A number of enterprises in the metallurgical, oil and construction industries began to produce military products.

In order to bring the leadership closer to the enterprises, many people's commissariats were disaggregated in 1939. Serious reorganization was also carried out in the defense industry. The people's commissariats of the aviation industry, weapons, ammunition and shipbuilding were created here. One after another, new aviation, engine-building, tank and other defense plants were put into operation.

The Party attached great importance to ensuring firm and active Party leadership in their activities. Experienced Bolsheviks were appointed as party organizers of the Central Committee -

good organizers are, as a rule, qualified engineers, people who are able to combine live party work with the solution of production problems. I have already spoken about one of these people - Vasily Mikhailovich Ryabikov. I got to know many others closely later, already during the Great Patriotic War, which I will tell about in due time. However, I emphasize that the Party organizers of the Central Committee played an enormous role in the consistent implementation of the Party's military policy and in ensuring a general rise in the production of defense products. In a word, huge work was carried out, it was carried out in all directions.

And it brought tangible results. For three years - from 1938 to 1940 - the production of military products increased by 2.3 times. On this basis, our Armed Forces were improved, their technical equipment and combat readiness were rapidly growing. This was especially noted by the XVIII Party Conference held in February 1941. The focus of the conference, as well as all the activities of the Party on the eve of the war in general, was the question of the work of industry. Its decisions formulated a number of specific economic and political tasks. At our plant, we studied these decisions in detail in the Party committee, in the Party organizations of the shops, at general meetings of workers, engineering and technical workers and employees. Once again they weighed their strengths and capabilities, redistributed the communists to the most responsible sectors. Particular attention was paid to the correct use of factory equipment, materials and all property, the strengthening of self-financing, and the further improvement of discipline. The solution to this problem was facilitated by measures to strengthen unity of command and improve the technical management of production, which we began to carry out at our plant two years ago. All the efforts of the Bolshevik team were aimed at fulfilling and overfulfilling the planned targets of 1941. In almost all respects, the plant was ahead of schedule. People worked under great pressure. And although we still had a peaceful sky over our heads, everyone was aware of the need to do everything in his power in order to fulfill both for himself and for the whole

country Lenin's first commandment: to be on the alert. We could not, we had no right to forget that we were within a hair's breadth of an enemy invasion. But, remembering this, preparing to repulse the enemy, in those pre-war months we continued to live a full-blooded and, as it seems now, especially happy life. On Monday, June 9, 1941, the opening of a new rest home was scheduled at our plant. It was a big event for the team. The plant already had its own rest houses in Zamostye and Shapki, a dispensary, summer cottages for children. And now one more rest house was added to them in Terioki, on the Karelian Isthmus, in a picturesque area on the shores of the Gulf of Finland.

On the eve of the opening, it was decided to make sure that it was ready to receive the first vacationers. Together with representatives of the party and trade union committees, I went to Terioki. We checked the condition of the premises and territory, the readiness of all services. Some shortcomings were immediately eliminated.

Late in the evening we returned to Leningrad and stopped at the plant. At the entrance to the plant management, we were met by the plant duty officer. "Alexei

Alexandrovich Kuznetsov called on the Smolninsk phone," he reported. - He said that you, Dmitry Fedorovich, should go to Moscow. Urgently. The ticket for the train is with a friend from the city committee, who is waiting for you at the station near car number 5.

- Train number ... -

First. I

glanced at my watch. Time was running out. I called home, asked my wife to quickly pack my travel suitcase. Handing me a ticket

at the station, a representative of the city committee took me away from escorting comrades and quietly said:

- Alexey Alexandrovich asked me to tell you that you are being summoned to the Central Committee.

Why, on what issue - is unknown. So you need to be prepared for anything...

A few minutes later the train started moving. Slowly swam back and now it has become completely the platform with the comrades accompanying me is not visible.

For the whole journey, he never closed his eyes. What did this challenge mean? Wheels tapped at the joints, counting kilometer after kilometer. And memory kept counting. Pictures of the distant and near past rose before my eyes. Volga, bright river of my childhood. Parental home in Samara. Father, mother, brothers... Communards-Chonovtsy and Red Army soldiers are my comrades-in-arms. Komsomol meetings. Vocational school. Party entry. Construction. Student suffering. Research Institute. The plant... My whole life passed before me in those hours that merged for me into short moments, when the train raced swiftly through the night.

Outside the car window, it was quickly getting light. The train was approaching Moscow. I didn't know what was waiting for me there. The nighttime reflections seemed to sum up everything that I managed to do in my thirty-two years. My conscience was clear. And I got out of the car cheerful, full of energy.

The capital greeted me with the transparent coolness of a June morning, cleanliness freshly washed streets. Muscovites hurried to work. The city began a new working day.

From the station I went straight to the Central Committee. At the entrance they warned that the pass had been ordered for me at 11 o'clock. There was about an hour and a half left. I went to the square opposite the Central

Committee building. Before that, I had to visit the Central Committee of the Party. Usually it was connected with the discussion of some important issue. Employees of the People's Commissariat, designers, directors of enterprises were invited to such meetings. It was announced in advance that it was necessary to report on what issue to be ready to speak.

Now there was none of that. While waiting, I looked to see if any of my acquaintances would appear at the building of the Central Committee. As time went. But no one

showed up. By eleven I went to the checkpoint. When handing over the pass, I was told that I should go to the secretary of the Central Committee of the party

G.M. Malenkov. He introduced himself at the reception. A few minutes later he was invited into the office. - You, Comrade Ustinov, do not know why you were invited? - asked, after greeting, the secretary of the Central

Committee of the CPSU (b). - No. - There is an opinion in the Central

Committee to appoint you People's Commissar for Armaments. Frankly, I expected anything but this. For a moment he collected his

thoughts. - Thank you for your trust. But can I justify it? It's one thing - a factory, and then the people's commissariat - dozens of factories.

- Fine. Think. Now go to the hotel. Don't tell anyone about our conversation yet. Then we'll call you and let you know your decision. I left the office. There was something to

think about. Of course, there was nothing extraordinary in the fact that plant directors were appointed people's commissars. I knew I.A. well. Likhachev, from the workers appointed director of the largest automobile plant in the country, and then from the plant - People's Commissar of the automotive industry. He also knew other facts of this kind. The appointed comrades coped with the responsible duties assigned to them.

Am I okay? I did not

notice how I went to Red Square. Stopped at the Mausoleum of V.I. Lenin. Makariev involuntarily remembered, the then pain from the news - Lenin died - again burned his heart. I do not know how long he stood at the

Mausoleum. But then another change of sentries took place. And it seems that it was at that moment that I truly realized: I was offered the post of people's commissar. In such a difficult time. What if the war really breaks out? Am I doing it?

In the evening, after dinner at the hotel, I went to bed. Fell asleep quickly. Apparently, the unusual stress of the day had an effect. I had no right to consult with anyone. Nobody called me anywhere. It even reassured me: maybe they changed their minds... In the morning, on the way to breakfast at the hotel buffet, I bought

Pravda. Looking through newspapers before the start of the working day has long become my habit. On the first page, it caught my eye: Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on the appointment ...

Usually you look through such messages fluently: the Motherland marked someone with a high award, someone was entrusted with a high post of leader. And then, as if something

pushed in the chest, when he saw, after the words "on the appointment of the People's Commissar of Armaments of the USSR," his surname and initials. But what about the words of Malenkov: go think, then we will call?

He quickly paid for breakfast and went to the people's commissariat, believing that they would probably know everything there. The first person I met in the corridor of the people's commissariat was the deputy chief of the central office, B.A. Khazanov. Before I had time to say hello and turn to him with a question, he fell upon me: - Why are you here? Don't you know

that directors are strictly forbidden from leaving the plant without permission? And you left. Who allowed? It is a crime! This should be severely punished! I had not yet had time to answer anything, when the first deputy people's commissar of armaments V.M. came

out of the office at the noise in the corridor. Ryabikov. When he saw me, he warmly greeted me and invited us to his office. We had just entered when the phone rang. V.M. Ryabikov picked up the phone: - I'm listening. No, I didn't. And what? Vasily

Mikhailovich listens and looks at me in surprise. He hung up. grabbed

a newspaper from the table, glanced at the first page and immediately held out his hand to

me: - I congratulate you from the bottom of my heart, Dmitry Fedorovich, on your appointment. We will work again together.

Khazanov, who did not understand anything, also took the newspaper. After reading, he was embarrassed and tried to quietly leave the office. But I held him back: - You did

the right thing, Boris Abramovich. Need to demand. Only now it's not so loud, and the words would do well to be more cultured. Although you are the deputy head of the main department, the directors of factories are also respected people.

When Khazanov left, I asked Vasily Mikhailovich a question that had arisen in me yesterday, after a conversation in Malenkov's office: - Where is Vannikov? - Boris Lvovich left

without saying anything

to anyone. The sixth page of the newspaper, where the

chronicle reported that B.L. Vannikov released from

the post of People's Commissar of Armaments, neither I nor Ryabikov had read it by that time.

Later we learned that B.L. Vannikov was arrested. A month later he was released and appointed as my deputy. I confess that I thought with some concern about how our relations would develop. But, as it turned out, my doubts were in vain. Boris Lvovich from the very first day after returning to the People's Commissariat showed that the main thing for him is the cause he is ready to serve in any rank and position. We worked together and harmoniously, as they say, hand in hand, for almost a year. And then, when in April 1942, Boris Lvovich headed the People's Commissariat of Ammunition, and in the post-war years our comradely, business relations were preserved. - Listen, Vasily Mikhailovich, but I probably need to report on my arrival in

people's commissariat? I asked Ryabikov.

Yes, you should probably report. I

decided from here, from V.M. Ryabikova, call N.A. Voznesensky - First Deputy Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars - Chairman of the State Planning Committee of the USSR, who oversaw the People's Commissariat for Armaments in the government.

Nikolai Alekseevich congratulated me on my appointment. "You need to take charge of the people's commissariat without delay," he said. - The main thing now is the fulfillment of planned targets, especially for the production of new weapons. Study this issue and report tomorrow how things are going. I wish you success. So, in fact, on the day of the publication of the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, I began to fulfill the duties of People's Commissar for Armaments. After a conversation with N.A. Voznesensky finally realized the fullness of the responsibility entrusted to me. Putting down the receiver, I turned to Ryabikov: "Vasily Mikhailovich, we need to convene a collegium. When can it be done, the fastest? - In an hour, Dmitry Fedorovich. - Fine. When all the members of the board gathered, I announced to them my assumption of office.

He told about the conversation with N.A. Voznesensky.

To go to him tomorrow with a report, one had to know the state of affairs in everything People's Commissariat, have the appropriate certificate.

It should be said that in terms of the structure, variety and volume of products manufactured by the enterprises subordinate to it, the People's Commissariat for Armaments was the most complex organism. He was in charge of the design, testing and production of field, naval, anti-tank and anti-aircraft artillery, cannon and machine gun weapons for aviation and tanks, small arms of all systems and ammunition for them, optical instruments for the Red Army and the Navy. The main structural subdivisions of the people's commissariat were the central offices with their subordinate factories.

The Main Artillery Directorate of the People's Commissariat supervised the production of all types of artillery. It was headed by N.E. Nosovsky, who had previously worked for a number of years as the director of a large artillery factory. One of the main departments headed by A.E. Dobrovolsky, was in charge of optics and instruments. These products were supplied to all types of the Armed Forces and branches of the armed forces. The issues of the production of ammunition for all types of small arms were dealt with by the main cartridge department. His boss was S.I. Vetoshkin. Material and technical supply of enterprises was carried out by the main department of supply and marketing. It was fully self-supporting and had offices and agencies in a number of cities across the country. The issues of building new enterprises were under the jurisdiction of the main department of capital construction. In addition, the People's Commissariat had departments for production and administration, technical, cooperation, planning and economic, transport and others. There were several production and administrative departments. Each of them was engaged in certain types of weapons, controlled the work of enterprises directly subordinate to the people's commissariat, and assisted them in solving production and other problems. The functions of the technical department included managing the development and implementation of measures aimed at further improving the design, technology and organization of the production of weapons. He directed research and design institutes, design bureaus, which were directly subordinate to the People's Commissariat, was engaged in the development of machine tool building, metallurgical and tool production at enterprises, issues of invention, standardization and technical information. It was in charge of a permanent technological exhibition and a technical library. In addition to factories, the People's Commissariat included 5 research and design institutes, 10 separate and central design bureaus, 8 universities, 13 technical schools and 4 workers' faculty. We also had our own publishing house, which published the magazines Armament, Optical-Mechanical Industry, and Production and Technical Bulletin.

One of the important bodies of the people's commissariat was the technical council. It had design, metallurgical, mechanical, technology and other sections, subsections and

working committees. A plenum of the technical council was periodically held, at which a technical policy in the industry was developed. The chairman of the technical council and at the same time the head of the technical department was Eduard Adamovich Satel, a highly trained and authoritative specialist in the field of armaments, in the past - the director of a large plant, deputy head and head of the main department. Doctor of Technical Sciences, Professor, he did a lot of scientific and pedagogical work, headed the department at the Moscow Higher Technical School named after N.E. Bauman, which he once completed.

The main issues of the industry's activities were decided by the collegium of the people's commissariat, which accumulated the collective experience and knowledge of its executives. Members of the Board - Deputy People's Commissar V.M. Ryabikov, I.A. Barsukov, I.A. Mirzakhonov, I.P. Karasev, the heads of the leading central departments and the technical department - were responsible for the state of affairs in specific areas and areas of the

industry. That is why all members of the board were involved in the preparation of the certificate and other necessary information. They worked late. Bearing in mind the parting words of Nikolai Alekseevich, I tried to carefully deal with the implementation of planned targets for the production of weapons, especially their new models. In the course of conversations with members of the board, he clarified the bottlenecks, the causes of failures, and the existing difficulties.

By the morning the certificate was ready. Together we also considered what could be done to increase the output of the most important products. All this was reported to N.A. Voznesensky. After listening to the report and meticulously clarifying a number of particular issues, he once again confirmed the need to increase the production of new weapons.

The volume of such production was already quite significant at that time. But the situation required an increase in the production of weapons, primarily artillery systems. The Central Committee of the Party paid constant attention to this question. His decision was personally controlled by I.V. Stalin. He repeatedly emphasized the huge role of artillery in the war. "If we look into history," said I.V. Stalin in 1937, we will see what an important role artillery played in all wars ... How did Napoleon win? First of all, artillery. How were the French defeated near Sedan in 1870? Mostly artillery. For the success of the war, an exceptionally valuable branch of the army is artillery. I would like our artillery to show that it is first class." The words of I.V. were also fresh in my memory. Stalin, said when summing up the results of the Soviet-Finnish armed conflict. Then he called artillery the god of war. During the years of the pre-war five-year plans, a lot of work was done to create a powerful artillery production. The creative thought and activity of our designers and production workers were aimed at the wide development and introduction of new equipment and advanced technology at the People's Commissariat factories. Special institutes and technical schools were created, from which thousands of engineers and production commanders came out. Research work was widely developed, which ensured a high technical level of artillery. In June 1941, a 76-mm mountain gun of the 1938 model of the year, a 107-mm gun of the 1940 model of the year, a 122-mm howitzer of the 1938 model of the year and a cannon of the same caliber of the 1931/37 model of the year, a 152-mm howitzer of the 1938 model of the

year were in mass production, 152 mm howitzer-gun model 1937, 203 mm howitzer model 1931.

For anti-aircraft artillery, the armament industry produced a 37-mm automatic gun of the 1939 model of the year and a semi-automatic 85-mm gun of the 1939 model of the year, recognized as the best in the world. The development of prototypes of a 100-mm anti-aircraft gun continued. Large-caliber 12.7-mm anti-aircraft machine guns of the V.A. system were also produced. Degtyarev and G.S. Shpagin and 7.62-mm anti-aircraft installations (single, twin, quad) under the Maxim machine gun. For arming tanks, a 7.62-mm tank machine gun of the

1939 model of the year, a 45-mm tank gun of the 1940 model of the year, and 76-mm tank guns of the 1933 and 1940 models were produced. The technical level of our artillery systems as a whole met the requirements of the time,

which was undoubtedly a great merit of the design teams of V.G. Grabin, F.F. Petrova, I.I. Ivanova, M.Ya. Krupchatnikova, L.V. Lyul'eva, L.A. Loktev and others. It should be said that two-thirds of the samples of artillery pieces that were in production by the beginning of the war were created in 1938-1940. They took into account the latest achievements of science and technology, as well as the experience of military operations in various parts of the world.

Soviet guns in terms of power, muzzle velocity, rate of fire, maneuverability, and the degree of introduction of automation in most cases surpassed the best foreign models. In particular, our divisional artillery was much better than the German one. The 122-mm howitzer of the 1938 model had especially good fighting qualities, which did not require modernization during the war and for many years after it. In general, all mass-produced guns were distinguished by their convenience and reliability in operation, ease of manufacture and ensured the implementation of combat

tasks.

When I got acquainted with the plan for the production of artillery pieces, I noticed that none of the plants produced 45-mm anti-tank and 76-mm regimental and divisional guns. - Vasily Mikhailovich, how to explain this situation? I asked Ryabikov.

"The production of these guns has been discontinued, Dmitry Fedorovich," he replied. - Why? - This is the requirement of the customer - the Main Artillery Directorate of the People's Commissariat of Defense, and in particular its chief, Marshal Kulik. What motivated this demand? - The need to replace these guns with new ones that have greater armor penetration due to the emerging trend of strengthening armor protection

German tanks.

- What is your opinion on this matter? - Apparently, there is a reason for this, Dmitry Fedorovich. But discontinue these guns, without having mastered the production of new ones, it was impossible. And it's not just my opinion...

Subsequent events confirmed the correctness of this view. We, in essence, had to rectify the situation already in the conditions of the outbreak of war. The overall production of artillery pieces was relatively high. In 1940, the arms industry produced more than 15 thousand guns of all calibers and types (field, anti-tank, tank, anti-aircraft and aircraft). Their average annual production in the Third Five-Year Plan was almost five times greater than in the Second Five-Year Plan. After the defeat of the White Finns, measures were taken to sharply increase the production of mortars of all calibers. Their development was carried out by the design bureau B.I. Shavyrin. In 1940, nine times more mortars were fired than in the previous year. Work was underway to create a 160-mm mortar, but they were completed already during the war.

A significant share of the products produced by the arms industry was small arms. In 1938-1941, new samples of it were created, including a carbine, a self-loading rifle by F.V. Tokarev, V.A. Degtyarev and G.S. Shpagin, light and heavy machine guns V.A. Degtyarev. Our small arms were not inferior to the best foreign models in terms of basic indicators. And our submachine gun, simple in design, convenient and reliable in combat use, the Shpagin submachine gun (PPSh) was in many ways superior to the German MP28-11 and MP38-40 submachine guns. Soon this was convincingly confirmed by the experience of military operations in the Great Patriotic War.

The production of small arms as the military grows for our country danger increased. In 1940, it was almost twice the level of 1938.

From the beginning of the 30s, work was underway to create anti-tank rifles, but, unfortunately, by the beginning of the war, a satisfactory model had not been created. One of the reasons for this was the incorrect assumption that the artillery would take the brunt of the fight against tanks in the war. Our People's Commissariat is also guilty here, who did not show

sufficient perseverance and determination in fine-tuning this type of weapon.

The arms industry also produced sights, panoramas, binoculars, periscopes, stereo tubes, rangefinders, and other optical instruments. The quality of domestic instrumentation was high, but the scale of its production, due to the lack of production capacity, remained relatively small.

Huge work was carried out in other defense industries. I was convinced of this with my own eyes during the review of new types of weapons of the Red Army, which was held at one of the training grounds near Moscow on Sunday, June 15, 1941. The review was attended by leaders of the party and government, the defense industry, and the highest military command. Before the start of the review, there was a lively exchange of

views among its participants about the TASS report of June 14, just published in the newspapers, which stated that "Germany is just as steadily observing the terms of the Soviet-German non-aggression pact as the Soviet Union, in view of which, according to the opinion of Soviet circles, the rumors about Germany's intention to break the pact and launch an attack on the USSR are devoid of any soil."

As far as I remember, all those present were well aware of the true purpose of the message - to verify the real intentions of the Nazis. This publication did not reassure any of us; on the contrary, it alerted us even more, because it directly indicated the imminent military danger.

The medium tank T-34, created by a design team led by M.I. Koshkina, A.A. Morozov and N.L. Kucherenko, and the heavy tank KV-1 - the brainchild of the design bureau of Zh.Ya. Kotin. Both of these tanks were significantly superior in terms of basic characteristics to the tanks of potential opponents. It should be noted that the production capacity of the tank-building industry of the USSR by the summer of 1941 exceeded that of Germany by one and a half times. However, the difficulties associated with the transition to the production of new combat vehicles at first held back their release. In 1940 and in the first half of 1941, our tank industry produced 639 KV tanks and 1225 T-34 tanks.

We knew what importance imperialism attached to aviation in its aggressive calculations. At the 18th Congress of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, it was noted that aviation is considered by the imperialist armies as a panacea for all military difficulties, the imperialists are counting on it, hoping to achieve victory in a future war with its help.

With this in mind, the Party has taken energetic steps to strengthen our aviation industry. By the end of 1940, the number of enterprises in this industry had increased by three-quarters compared to 1937, and by the summer of 1941, production capacity was almost one and a half times greater than the capacity of aircraft factories in Nazi Germany. The Red Army was armed with Yak-1, MiG-3, LaGG-3 fighters, a Pe-2 dive bomber, and an Il-2 armored attack aircraft. All these aircraft had high performance data for that time, and some of them were the best in the world. Thus, the MiG-3 was superior in combat characteristics to aircraft of the same type in Germany, England and the United States. The IL-2 attack aircraft had no equal. The Pe-2 high-speed dive bomber was better than the German Yu-87 and Yu-88 aircraft of the same type. The armament industry supplied 7.62-mm and 12.7-mm aircraft machine guns, 20-mm and 23-mm aircraft

guns, which had a high rate of fire, to equip Soviet combat aircraft. Unfortunately, with the superiority of the USSR in the total volume of production of aircraft of new types of combat vehicles, on the eve of the war, we produced less than in Germany. I would like to say about one more sample of Soviet weapons, which I first had a chance to see in action at the same show on June 15th. We are talking

about the combat rocket launcher BM-13, later called "Katyusha" and won under this name

legendary glory. The installation had a high fire performance, could conduct salvo fire, make a quick maneuver. No less important was the fact that she had a simple device, was, as they say, technologically advanced. This made it possible to establish mass production of the BM-13 in a short time. One volley of 16 132-mm caliber rockets was fired from each installation at the review. The fire was directed at light field shelters approximately 6 kilometers away. After firing, we inspected the targets. The results made a huge impression on those present. A few days later, on June 21, 1941, a decision was made on the mass production of rockets, combat

installations and the formation of rocket artillery units. The creators of the new weapon Yu.A. Pobedonostsev, I.I. Gwai, L.E. Schwartz, V.A. Artemyev and others were awarded the Stalin Prize. The idea of what was done in the country to strengthen the defense capability and increase the combat power of the Armed Forces will be incomplete, if not

to say about the armament of the Navy. Without going into details, I note that in 1939-1940 the shipbuilding capacity in the USSR tripled, and the fleet received over 200 new warships of various classes from industry. The enterprises of our People's Commissariat also took part in their equipment. In particular, back in 1938, a 180-mm three-gun turret was created for cruisers and coastal batteries, which surpassed similar artillery systems of foreign fleets. The destroyers received a new 130-mm gun. Coastal artillery was equipped with 152, 180, 356 and 406 mm caliber guns. By the beginning of the war, she had more than 1,100 guns with a firing range of 21 to 45.5 kilometers.

It seems that even the facts presented here are enough to show the inconsistency of the attempts of the bourgeois falsifiers of history to prove that our country, our army was supposedly not ready to repel aggression. Long before the bad memory of June 22, 1941, the party foresaw the possibility and took into account the reality of the threat of an attack by fascist Germany on the USSR and prepared the country to repel aggression, to war. At the same time, in practical activities to strengthen the country's defense capability, increase the combat power of the Armed Forces, she was guided by Lenin's teaching on the defense of the socialist Fatherland. Everything that was done by the Party in the field of military

construction during the period of the growing threat of imperialist aggression in 1938-1941 was of fundamental importance for the fate of our country, for the future victory in the war. Fascist Germany treacherously attacked the Soviet Union at the

very height of our creative work. Unfortunately, we did not have time to complete much of what was scheduled.

And when the invasion of enemy hordes armed to the teeth became a fact, it was necessary to double, triple, and tenfold efforts in order to fully implement the measures worked out in advance by the Party, taking into account the amendments introduced by the war.

Part Two The Trial

Chapter 1 Invasion

Get up, great country!

Time erases many details of long-standing events from memory. But the day of June 22, 1941, was remembered by me, as, probably, by everyone who had a chance to survive it, in the smallest

details. At dawn

on June 22, the telephone rang in my apartment. Picking up the phone, I heard the voice of N.A. Voznesensky. "Voznesensky is speaking," he

said. - War, Dmitry Fedorovich. German troops crossed our border. War. Please come to me ... I immediately called V.M. Ryabikov, gave him the news of the outbreak of war and asked him to

inform all the deputies of the people's commissar, the secretary of the party committee, urgently gather them in the people's commissariat, then instructed the duty officer of the people's commissariat to call the heads of the main departments and departments, and through them all the employees - after all, it was Sunday - and hurried to people's commissariat. Here, first of all, I signed a letter to the Commissar of Defense Marshal S.K. Timoshenko. The request contained in the letter was of particular importance to us. Its essence was to provide, in accordance with a government decree, deferrals from conscription into the Red Army to employees of enterprises and organizations of the People's Commissariat for Armaments. The letter was accompanied by a previously prepared calculation of the distribution of deferrals by military districts. Having set priorities for those who arrived at the People's Commissariat V.M. Ryabikov, I.A. Barsukov, I.A. Mirzakhonov and I.P. Karasev, went to a meeting with N.A. Voznesensky. V.A. was already in his waiting room. Malyshev, A.I. Shakhurin, then other

people's commissars of the defense industries came up. Exactly at nine we were invited to Voznesensky's office. Nikolai Alekseevich got up from the table.

"You all know why I have called you together," he said. - Judging by everything, we have a difficult, very difficult war ahead of us. From the country, first of all from the economy, the maximum effort of all forces will be required. Within the next 24 hours, we need to develop programs to increase the production of armaments for the army, taking into account the existing mobilization plans, take measures to increase output, to implement the strictest economy and replace scarce materials, to find substitutes for those that we receive from abroad ...

Returning to the people's commissariat, I invited all the leadership to my place and informed about tasks set by the government.

- It is necessary, comrades, to contact the factories, let them expand without delay production.

We were discussing specific measures to immediately increase the output of guns, small arms, and other products, when Marshal G.I. Sandpiper. He looked gloomy, even sullen. After saying hello, he asked:

- May I say a few words to my comrades, Dmitri Fedorovich? - Please. There is a war going on, comrades.

With the weapons that our industry produces, the Soviet troops are already beating the enemy. But we need more guns, mortars, machine guns, rifles. As much as possible! Approaching me, the marshal said quietly: - I say goodbye to you, Dmitry Fedorovich. - And when I

got up to shake his hand, even lowering my

voice, I said: - Now I'm going to the front. N.D. was appointed head of the GAU. Yakovlev, chief of artillery of the Kyiv Special Military District. Keep in touch with him now. G.I. Kulik said goodbye to everyone, wished them success in their work and left the office. In the afternoon, reports began to come in about rallies held at the enterprises of the people's commissariat. Such rallies

were, perhaps, the first, but already quite definite, clear and, in their nature and scale, a truly nationwide reaction to the perfidious attack of the enemy. Here is what was said, in particular, in the resolution adopted at the rally on June 22, 1941 by the staff of the Bolshevik plant:

"At the first call of our native Soviet government, we will rise as one to the Patriotic War for the socialist Motherland, for communism. We

we assure our party and government ... that we will work tirelessly to further strengthen the defensive might of the Motherland, to equip the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union with powerful military equipment. We will selflessly work to provide the Red Army, Navy and aviation with perfect weapons even better. We will give all our strength, all our energy, all our skills for complete victory over the

enemy..."⁹ And today these lines cannot be read without emotion. They are dictated not only by the

mind, but also by the heart. They expressed the firm determination of the Soviet people to defeat the enemy, to defend the gains of the Great October Revolution, the Soviet system chosen by the people, the path of communist construction. The same was the content of the resolutions of thousands and thousands of other rallies that took place on the first day of the war throughout the country. A truly heroic spiritual potential was created by the party in our society in just over two decades before the war! Meticulously, scrupulously, we searched, took into account untapped

reserves and opportunities, this has become the norm. Everything for the war – that is how the party set the task before us in a Leninist way. And in order to accomplish this task, it was necessary, first of all, to organize daily activities in a new way, in a military way. And, of course, I had to start with myself, with the leadership of the people's commissariat.

And earlier, in the pre-war months, not only every hour, but every minute of the day was loaded, it seemed, to the limit. But the war put forward new demands, compressed time even more, greatly accelerated the labor rhythm, erased the boundaries between day and night, imperiously excluded everything secondary, secondary. I

frankly admit that sometimes I myself can't believe that it turned out to be possible at all to endure everything that fell to the lot of the Soviet people in the last war, which lasted endless four years. However, the Soviet people survived, withstood, did not bend under the immensely heavy burden of urgent worries and problems, irretrievable losses and all-consuming labor. On June 23, the leaders of the

people's commissariats of the defense industry gathered again, as scheduled, at N.A. Voznesensky. The seal of deep anxiety, concern lay on the face of Nikolai Alekseevich. I had to work with him throughout the war. But never afterwards did I see him so stern, even withdrawn, as then, in the early days. In general, N.A. Voznesensky was a straight and open person by nature. He always approached the solution of issues in a party way, in a state way, with high responsibility, boldly. He liked efficiency in work, accuracy in reports and calculations, he himself was distinguished by great ability to work.

Then, on the second day of the war, Nikolai Alekseevich was, I repeat, gloomy and laconic. And this somehow internally pulled us up, obliged us to be more collected, more concentrated. Frankly speaking, the time that had passed after receiving the news of the treacherous attack of fascist Germany was so filled with new deeds and worries that the very fact of the war was perceived at first as something abstract. And even now, when the first days of war have passed, when reports have already been received about the course of hostilities, about casualties and destruction, we still have not truly realized, have not imagined with our own eyes the scale of the disaster that has come to us. This consciousness came a little later, when it became clear that under the onslaught of the enemy, the Red Army, despite heroic resistance, was forced to retreat, and the Nazi hordes continued to advance deep into the country.

Fascist Germany has suddenly dealt a cruel blow to our country. Its troops were fully mobilized, concentrated in advance in the border areas,

⁹ Leningradskaya Pravda. 1941. June 22 (special issue).

had two years of experience in warfare. Long before the attack on the USSR, Germany completely transferred its economy to the war footing. It had at its disposal the economic and military resources of almost all of Western Europe. The fascists seized the entire arsenal of armaments of European countries, huge reserves of metal, strategic raw materials, metallurgical and military plants. The Soviet country found itself compelled to engage in single combat with the colossal war machine created by international imperialism.

And again, as during the years of the Civil War and foreign military intervention, the question addressed to every Soviet person was raised: "What did you do for the front?" An ardent desire to do as much as possible, to give all one's strength and knowledge for victory determined both the measure of labor, the measure of responsibility, and the measure of heroism - whether it be a heroic deed or a labor

one. Developed at a meeting with N.A. Voznesensky's measures to mobilize the Soviet economy to meet the needs of the front, to increase military production fully corresponded to this desire. We parted with one desire - to do the possible, and even impossible, but to provide the army with everything necessary to defeat the enemy. And that was the main thing.

This was the attitude of the leadership of all branches of the national economy, of all links of the party and state machinery. and it resulted in effective organizational and political work among the masses, aimed at restructuring the national economy, people's consciousness, and the life of the country on a military footing. Such

data speaks about the complexity of the tasks. The People's Commissariat for Armaments was supposed to double the production of 85-mm anti-aircraft guns, six times the production of 37-mm anti-aircraft guns, and several times for anti-tank and tank guns and small arms.

To equip the formed military units and formations, weapons were required - in large quantities and as soon as possible. That is why the People's Commissariat has developed a system of measures to intensify the development and production of weapons. To control their implementation, a government-approved schedule of daily, weekly and monthly production was used. It reflected the quantitative indicators of production, the time of receipt of raw materials and supplies to manufacturing plants, the timing of the release and dispatch of weapons to the front. In the early days of the war, it was often necessary, as they

say, to fumble on the phone

factory directors. The

essence of the conversation usually boiled down to

the following. - How is the shipment

of weapons going? As a rule,

the answer followed: -

Everything is shipped according to the schedule. -

Additional shipment

over schedule required.

- It is very difficult. - Take action. Necessary! On the second day of the war, June 23, 1941, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks put into effect the mobilization plan for the production of ammunition adopted two and a half weeks earlier. This plan provided for, to a certain extent, the restructuring of industry, primarily metal-working and machine-building enterprises, to fulfill orders from the front. In the next four days, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks adopted important resolutions on the development of the tank and aviation industries in wartime conditions, as well as decisions that played a large role in the deployment of the war economy, in particular, on the evacuation of industrial enterprises, state institutions and the

population from the front-line regions. and others. The war required each of us to clearly and clearly define our place in the nationwide struggle. At the end of June, a party meeting was held at the People's Commissariat. They gathered quickly, sat down in their usual places without the usual jokes

As I now see the comrades with whom I had to work side by side throughout the war. Of course, we did not know then that four years of severe military trials awaited us. On the contrary, some believed that the defeat of the Nazis was a matter of weeks, maximum months. But be that as it may, the war became a reality, and the natural desire was the determination, not sparing oneself, to fight for victory. It was with

such determination that all the speeches at the meeting were imbued. They are remembered primarily for the fact that each of them was to the point, each was short, but really interested, businesslike. Not so rare, unfortunately, in other collectives at meetings, speeches are heard in which you will not immediately get to the point. It happened to me more than once to listen to such speakers who knew how to speak flamboyantly, sonorously, but, as a rule, did little. Everyone knows the price of such speeches, but nevertheless, even in our time, no, no, and even an empty speech will sound somewhere at a meeting. Probably, in party organizations it would not hurt to appreciate them, to help the communists get rid of idle talk, bearing in mind Lenin's instruction that the word is also a matter, especially the word of a communist. So, I repeat, the speeches of the communists at our first party meeting during the war years were business-

like, even harsh. The environment itself dictated the style of work. By the way, this style - responsible, sharply critical, economical, concrete - was preserved in the party organization of the people's commissariat, and in all other party organizations, in which I often happened to visit throughout the war. Remembering this, I think how deeply in such a short period of time - a little over two decades of Soviet power - the ideas, instructions,

advice of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin entered into the flesh and blood of the party, into the minds of the communists. After all, the life and activity of our party organization, like that of hundreds of thousands of other party cells, was built in strict and exact accordance with Lenin's proposition that in wartime conditions "all communists, first of all and most of all ... all Soviet workers must pull themselves together." military, transferring the maximum of his work, his efforts and concerns to the immediate tasks of the war ... "10. Such a formulation of the question was natural for us Communists. We never for a moment forgot about the huge responsibility that fell on our shoulders. In a difficult time for the country, this responsibility doubled, tripled, deeds, thoughts, concerns were subordinated to it. It seems that on the evening of the second day of the war, B.A. called me. Fratkin, director of the plant named after M.I. Kalinin. He reported on the measures taken to increase production, listed his requests, and

at the end of the conversation said: - You know, Dmitry Fedorovich, here we have another, new problem. - Which? I asked somewhat warily, catching some unusual shade in the director's tone, a mixture of bewilderment and pride. - I'm listening to.

"You see, Dmitri Fyodorovich, what's the matter. Workers and employees after the end of the shift do not want to leave their places. What kind of rest, they say, because the war. We will work as hard as we can! How to be?

The director's question put me in a difficult position. I remember that at that time we agreed to allow an hour or two of overtime work at the plant. In a similar way, the issue was resolved with other enterprises of the People's Commissariat, in which, according to the directors' reports, the same problem arose. A few days later, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR adopted the Decree "On the working hours of workers and employees in wartime." Thus, the initiative born among the masses was legalized.

A warm response from millions of Soviet people was caused by a song that sounded already in the first days of the war and became a kind of anthem for the nationwide struggle against the hated enemy:

Get up, huge country, Get up
for mortal combat With the
dark fascist force, With the
damned horde!

And a huge country stood up for a holy and right fight for its freedom and independence, stood up as one person. A worker and a collective farmer, a teacher and an engineer, all working people, the entire population, both old and young, rose to defend their socialist Fatherland. Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians, Uzbeks and Kazakhs, Georgians and Azerbaijanis, Lithuanians and Moldavians, Latvians and Kirghiz, Tajiks and Armenians, Turkmen and Estonians rose up - all nations, all nationalities of the Soviet Union. All the people got up. The war of the Soviet

Union against fascist Germany from its first day and hour became a just war of liberation against the imperialist aggressor, became a nationwide, Patriotic war. And not just the Patriotic, but also the Great, because the very existence of a new social system, with which working humanity rightly connects its future, was at stake. What path will the world development follow, will the peoples of the entire planet be saved from the brown plague spreading across the globe, or are they doomed to fascist slavery? That was the question. And he decided on the Soviet-German front.

On military lines

In order to defeat such a powerful enemy as fascist Germany, strength was needed, and tremendous strength, not only unprecedented moral and political stamina, endurance, and solidarity of millions of Soviet people were needed, but also the appropriate material and technical means for conducting armed struggle and conquering victory.

Soberly assessing the capabilities of the aggressor and taking into account everything that had already been done before the war to strengthen the defense, develop and improve the military economy, increase the mobilization capabilities of industry, the party planned to transfer the entire life of the country to a war footing. This work was headed by the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of

Bolsheviks. The country was stirred up by the directive sent on June 29, 1941 to party and Soviet organizations by the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks on the mobilization of all forces and means to defeat the fascist invaders. This directive was permeated with the ideas of Lenin's teaching on the defense of the socialist Fatherland and was a clear program for turning the country into a single fighting camp. In order to centralize the leadership of the country, to quickly and maximally mobilize material and human resources to achieve victory over the enemy, to organize close interaction between the front and rear, on June 30, 1941, by a joint decision of the Presidium of the Supreme Council, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks and the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, an emergency body was created leadership - the State Defense Committee headed by I.V. Stalin. All power in the country was con-

On the same day, the economic plan for the third quarter of 1941 was approved. He determined the main directions of the restructuring of the national economy in order to uninterruptedly meet the needs of the war. The essence of the planned measures was to mobilize the forces and means of the country, all sectors of the economy - industry, agriculture, transport to fulfill orders from the front, to redistribute material, financial and labor resources in favor of military production.

The program for transferring the country to a military footing, developed by the Central Committee of the Party and the Soviet government, was outlined in a speech by I.V. Stalin, with which, on behalf of the Politburo of the Central Committee, he spoke on the radio on July 3, 1941. The call of the party "Everything for the front, everything for victory!" was addressed to the working class, the collective farm

peasantry, popular intelligentsia. The Red Army was tasked with defending every inch of land, fighting to the last drop of blood for our cities and villages, exhausting and bleeding the German fascist troops in defensive battles, defeating and driving them from Soviet soil, and helping the peoples of Europe throw off the fascist yoke. ... Heavy, bloody battles

were going on at the front. The Red Army held back the onslaught of the Nazi troops, inflicting significant damage on them. Only in the first three weeks after the start of the invasion of the Soviet Union, fascist Germany lost more than half of the initial number of tanks and over a thousand aircraft. Her losses in manpower were enormous.

In the most difficult situation at the beginning of the war, as, indeed, throughout its entire duration, the determining condition for the successful solution of all the tasks that confronted the country - both military-strategic, and socio-economic, and scientific and technical - was the leadership of the party. All its threads converged in the Central Committee, in the Politburo, the State Defense

Committee. The Central Committee systematically listened to reports and discussed the military and economic work of the Party organizations, and provided them with all possible assistance. To promptly solve the most complex problems of the war economy, the Central Committee and the State Defense Committee convened special meetings with the participation of the secretaries of the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of the Union republics, regional committees and regional committees. These meetings were attended by people's commissars for defense and other branches of industry, leading economic workers. In a number of cases, the commissions set up by the Central Committee and the GKO, headed by members of the Politburo or the Central Committee, were sent to the localities to take the necessary measures and coordinate the

The unfavorable development of events at the front greatly complicated the fulfillment of delivered military-economic plan for the tasks quarter of the development of an operational 1942 for the regions of the Volga region, the Urals, Western Siberia, Kazakhstan and Central Asia. In drawing up this plan, I, like other people's commissars, had a chance to participate directly. The new plan was designed to relocate industrial enterprises from the frontline zone to the East and deploy there the production of military equipment, as well as metal, coal, and oil products. It provided for the commissioning of new energy capacities and factories, an increase in the throughput capacity of railways, and an increase in state reserves. It was necessary to increase the output of defense products as quickly as possible, to subordinate the work of mechanical engineering, heavy, light,

food and local industries to the interests of the front. Three weeks after the start of the war, Pravda wrote: "Industry is the technical and material base of the front. We cannot have "peaceful enterprises" now. Every plant, every factory must work to meet the needs of the war"¹¹. Along with the restructuring of industry, it was necessary to change the distribution of food resources. The enemy managed to capture the richest agricultural areas, significant food supplies. The introduction of the card system

became a necessity. In the difficult conditions of the war, rural workers solved a task of paramount importance. The village fed both the front and the rear, provided industry with raw materials - and all this despite the fact that it was left with practically no male hands. In the first year of the war alone,

two-thirds of the chairmen of the collective farms, almost 90 percent of the machine operators, went to the front. Those who remained had to work in the fields and farms for two, for three, to make up for the lack of people and machines. Everyone understood: the country needs bread, the front needs it. It was necessary just like tanks, planes, guns. "If we evaluate now ... in the ninth month of the war, various types of work in our country," M.I. wrote in the spring of 1942. Kalinin, then

¹¹ Is it true. 1941. July 10.

spring field work can be put as a priority. Only the production of ammunition and weapons can be compared with them ... A breakthrough in agricultural work would have no less harmful consequences than a failure on one or another sector of the military front "And if in 1941, mainly with the help of the simplest machines, human draft power and manual labor was harvested two-thirds of the grain, then in 1942 - already four-fifths.

It was also work in the name of victory. Our collective-farm system has become a powerful support for the front and ensured the maximum mobilization of the production and material resources of the countryside. It was this, and not Lend-Lease food supplies, as reactionary Western propaganda sometimes tries to present, that was of decisive importance for providing the country and the Red Army with food, and industry with raw materials. Lend-lease gave us an average of 0.5 million tons a year, in terms of grain, that is, less than 3 percent of the average annual grain harvest in the USSR during the war.

From the first days of the war, the problem of labor cadres arose with all its acuteness. Millions of people were mobilized into the army, which dramatically changed the number of workers in the rear. A significant part of the population, including skilled workers, could not evacuate - they remained in the temporarily occupied territory, went to the militia and partisan detachments. The number of workers and employees by the end of 1941 was reduced by 13 million compared with the beginning of the year.

In connection with the restructuring of the national economy on a war footing, it was necessary not only to provide industry, especially defense, with workers, but also to redistribute them between individual sectors and economic regions of the country. By decision of the Politburo of the Central Committee under the Council of People's Commissars, a Committee for the Accounting and Distribution of Labor was created. He carried out a number of measures to redistribute human resources in favor of the defense industry. A lot of work has been done to regulate working hours, attract workers from the light and food industries, public utilities, employees from the administrative apparatus, adolescents, women to the military industry and related industries, and mobilize the unemployed population. But this was not enough. In February 1942, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR issued a Decree "On the mobilization of the able-bodied urban population for the wartime period to work in production and construction." Highly skilled workers and specialists of higher and medium qualifications in the decisive branches of production were reserved from being drafted into the army, and workers in the military industry were mobilized and assigned to work for the enterprises in which they worked.

An important source of replenishment of the personnel of the war economy was the system of state labor reserves created before the war. It was supplemented by the widespread training of replacement workers directly in production, right at the machine tool. Experienced workers, engineers and technicians were attached to the newcomers. As a result, about 1.3 million workers were qualified in 1942 alone. And yet the situation

with labor resources throughout the war remained tense.

Of paramount importance was the redistribution of financial resources carried out by the party, which were directed primarily to cover military expenses. It was necessary to find and put into operation additional sources of financing the war economy. One of these sources, in addition to taxes and fees, was voluntary contributions, government loans, and savings of the population. In the name of victory over the enemy, the Soviet people were ready to give everything they had for the needs of the war, often denying themselves the most necessary. In this I see one of the most disturbing evidence of the truly national character of the Great Patriotic War.

The gigantic scale and complexity of the restructuring of the economy, the entire life of the country, required effective leadership everywhere at all levels and in all links of the national economy. Responsibility for the state of affairs in its individual branches was assigned to members and candidate members of the Politburo of the Central Committee, who were at the same time members of the GKO. So, N.A. was in charge of the production of weapons and ammunition. Voznesensky, aircraft and aircraft engines - G.M. Malenkov, tanks - V.M. Molotov, food, fuel and clothing - A.I. Mikoyan. They carried out the general management of production planning, coordinated the demands of the front with the possibilities of production. It should be said that almost three-quarters of all members of the Central Committee and half of the candidate members of the Central Committee took an active and direct part in the restructuring of the national economy, the organization of the war economy. And since they were endowed, as a rule, with emergency powers, they could ensure the prompt mobilization of all necessary resources for the needs of defense production. Some of them combined this work with participation in the activities of the military councils of associations.

The needs of the war were subordinated to all the activities of the Central Committee of the Communist Parties of the Union republics, regional, regional, city and district party committees, state and economic bodies, and public organizations. "The apparatus of the party organ - the regional committee, the regional committee, the city committee, the district committee," Pravda wrote on July 10, 1941, "should work like the apparatus of a military headquarters. Party workers must set an example for all workers in the Soviet and economic apparatus with their clarity, efficiency, resourcefulness,

diligence. As the defense industry expanded, branch departments were created in local party bodies. The most experienced workers were sent to them. This contributed to the prompt resolution of all issues related to the placement of military orders, the distribution between enterprises of materials, fuel and electricity necessary to complete tasks in a short time. From the first days of the war until its victorious conclusion,

the first secretaries of regional committees, city committees, district committees of the party and, as a rule, secretaries for the armaments industry, heads of industry departments wherever the enterprises of our people's commissariat were located, took the most direct part together with directors, chief engineers, designers not only in organizing the production of weapons, but also in mobilizing all forces to intensify this process. Party organs paid special attention to developing the initiative and creativity of the working people and labor collectives, to strengthening their role in improving technology and raising labor productivity. These issues were regularly considered at meetings of the bureau and plenums of district, city, and regional party

committees, and were submitted to meetings of party activists. Looking through archival documents, I came across among them the minutes of the meeting of the party activists of one of the Ural cities, where during the war years a group of armaments factories was concentrated. The meeting took place on July 20-21, 1942. I happened to participate in its work, and I remember well the report of the Secretary of the City Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks F.P. Kozlov, and debate. I also spoke at that party activist. He talked about things that worried

everyone, about shortcomings, which at that difficult time were still quite a few and which needed to be eliminated as soon as possible. In order for the reader to more clearly imagine the atmosphere of the

meeting of party activists, the very spirit of efficiency, criticality, and the passionate interest of the Communists in solving the problems at hand, I will quote a short excerpt from the transcript of my speech at that time.

"I walked around the production day and night, at different times. Comrades, how many still unused reserves! Let someone tell me now that there is not enough equipment. (Voice from the floor: "20 percent of the equipment is idle!") Right. By

individual industries, I would say, much more. Take the 700th production (as the production of an aircraft gun was then called. - *D. U*), more than 20 percent are idle there. But when we called the head of production, Comrade Zubov, and began to talk about how he was failing his factory, bringing the Red Army down, he demanded machine tools from us. Comrades, we have just started organizing new production. Taking advantage of the fact that the entire leadership of both the city committee

and the regional committee is present here, I would ask you to help us in this new business. We need to give people. Since such an honorable task as the organization of new production has been given, it is necessary to act quickly in order to give the front a large amount of this production in the shortest possible time ... Much must be done to move forward further. The production managers who have gathered here, the communist comrades behind the machine tool, the leaders of shop, group and factory Party

organizations, the heads of production, must look forward to tomorrow. It is necessary to increase the exactingness both to oneself and to others, to agitate with concrete deeds, and not with groundless general conversations, promises and promises" 13 . With a good feeling I remember the leaders of party organs, wartime party workers. Their daily routine work does not fit the generally accepted criteria of achievement. It is difficult to weigh, measure, compare with anything. However, this human-oriented work had the most direct and ultimately decisive impact both on production indicators and on the solution of all the tasks in general that confronted us, the armed forces, and the whole country. It is impossible to carry on this work without giving it your heart, your soul. It requires burning from a person, because without this, a flame cannot be ignited in other people.

An important role was played by party leaders who worked directly at the most important defense enterprises - the party organizers of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks and the party organizers of the Central Committee of the Communist Parties of the Union republics, regional committees and regional committees. For example, the party organizers of the Central Committee of the party in the initial period of the war headed the party organizations at 1170 industrial enterprises. Under their leadership, the activities of the party committees acquired an unusually versatile, one might say, universal character.

Andrey Evdokimovich Ivantsov, the party organizer of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks at one of the Ural artillery factories, appears before the mind's eye. In the past, a worker at a defense plant, a graduate of the Leningrad Military Mechanical Institute, Andrei Evdokimovich possessed that labor leaven that the workers immediately feel. He studied the production to the subtleties. He was constantly in the midst of the working masses and, as a truly familiar person for the workers, he knew for sure her moods, needs, demands, he knew how to talk to her, to speak simply and clearly, without loud words, but in a way that touched the soul. He knew how, if necessary, to stand at the machine and show how to work. And party activists around Ivantsov grouped to match him. As a matter of fact, they were the actual core of the plant's party organization - a militant, active organization that, with its will and energy, ensured the successful fulfillment of any production tasks. During the period of relocation of enterprises from the frontline areas, the reception, placement and inclusion in production of equipment, resources, people in a new place, the party organization of the plant did a lot of work. Constant

Party concern required the correct placement of cadres of specialists, production commanders. This question was difficult, given that among the people who arrived at the plant at first, there were often two, or even three, equivalent in their business qualities and positions that they had previously held, chief mechanics, chief power engineers, heads of workshops, deputies director, other specialists and engineering and technical workers. It was here that, along with exactingness, great tact and

¹³ Party archive of the Udmurt regional committee of the CPSU. F. 54. Op. 2. D. 1. L. 58-60.

patience, the ability to include people in the case, avoiding unnecessary insults and achieving a complete understanding of the situation. I must say that the party committee, and above all, of course, A.E. Ivantsov successfully coped with this difficult task, which provided invaluable assistance to the director A.P. Zolotarev, chief engineer E.A. Gulyantsu in establishing and urgently increasing the production of weapons. In a

short time, the party organization of the plant managed to create a close-knit labor collective from people who arrived from various factories, from different regions of the country. It was a friendly working-class family in which representatives of almost four, as I remember, dozens of nationalities of the country lived and worked side by side, equally shared sorrows and joys. Party organizations and groups were set up in every workshop, at every section. Yes, perhaps there was no such brigade at the plant in which at least one communist did not work. It was precisely the workshop party organizations, party groups, and communists that became the centers in the collectives in which both the general mood and the rhythm of joint activity were developed.

In many ways, it was thanks to the substantive, purposeful and active work of the party organization that the plant successfully coped with solving the problems of capital construction, creating a single technological chain from the equipment that arrived, and transferring production to a stream. Working in the most critical, hot areas, the communists - builders, assemblers, adjusters, mechanics showed examples of shock work. A team of thousands acted as one person. And the result surpassed everything, even the most daring forecasts. Already in February 1942, the flow began to operate, and in March the intense plan for the production of guns was overfulfilled. And in the future, the plant continuously, in strict accordance with the schedule, supplied weapons to the front. A

major role in transferring the economy to a military footing and improving the management of the defense industries was played by the creation at the very beginning of the war of new people's commissariats - the tank industry, and then the mortar armament, which was headed by V.A. Malyshev and P.I. Parshin, and in the apparatus of the State Planning Commission - the departments of weapons, ammunition, shipbuilding, aircraft building and tank building. G.N. was the head of the weapons department throughout the war. Pashkov. Our people's commissariat also maintained close ties with the deputy chairmen of the State Planning Committee of the USSR V.V. Kuznetsov, N.A. Borisov, P.I. Kirpichnikov.

The government's decree on expanding the rights of people's commissars in wartime conditions contributed to the increase in the effectiveness of the work of people's commissariats. In addition, in connection with the significantly increased volume of work, the staff and structure of a number of people's commissariats were changed by a decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR. For example, we have created production and administrative departments for anti-aircraft, field, naval and heavy artillery, weapons and machine-gun production with subordination to each group of factories. The metallurgical department was re-introduced. At the same time, one main department, the bureau of technical expertise and other divisions were abolished. To improve technical assistance to enterprises and design new industries, specialization was more clearly delineated and the work of the design institutes of the people's commissariat was reorganized. In early July 1941, Vladimir Georgievich Kostygov, Vladimir Nikolayevich Novikov, Alexander Nikolayevich Sergeev and Nikolai Dmitrievich Ageev were additionally approved as deputy people's commissars for armaments. Soon, as I already mentioned, Boris Lvovich Vannikov was appointed

to the same position. The war required the improvement of the style of leadership, above all, an increase in diligence and efficiency. Life forced the responsible workers of the People's Commissariat to know exactly the capabilities of each subordinate plant, its availability of resources and materials, the state of output for each day, the specific reasons for the underfulfillment of the program and urgently took effective measures to rectify the situation. The staff of the People's

Commissariat worked harmoniously. government orders,

State Defense Committee promptly communicated to enterprises and institutions. There was a clear system of control over their implementation, over the output of products by factories. In the extremely unfavorable situation

at the beginning of the war, it was necessary, simultaneously with the deployment of mass production of weapons, to evacuate enterprises and organize production in new locations. This work was supervised by the Evacuation Council, headed by a candidate member of the Politburo of the Central Committee N.M. Shvernik. The Council determined the enterprises and institutions subject to evacuation, their new locations, the terms and means of relocation, and exercised control over its progress. Draft decisions on the evacuation of enterprises were prepared by the people's commissariats and considered with the participation of the people's commissars or their deputies at the Council, after which the Politburo of the Central Committee and the GKO were approved. This gave the gigantic work associated with the evacuation a high level of organization, planning, and coordination of actions at all levels and at all levels.

I had the opportunity to participate in the activities of the Council for the Evacuation, to directly feel the huge scale of the tasks of relocating many hundreds of enterprises, millions of people, and the severity of the problems that arise hourly, every minute. I must say that Nikolai Mikhailovich Shvernik calmly, confidently and firmly solved these tasks and problems. He knew well and accurately assessed the situation on the fronts, skillfully involved local party and Soviet bodies in the case.

The issues of moving the enterprises of our People's Commissariat from the central regions to the East were promptly resolved. At the beginning of July, the State Defense Committee designated 26 such plants for us. The first needed to evacuate the Kiev Arsenal. His evacuation was somewhat unusual. In the last

days of June, N.E. came into my office. Nosovsky, head of the head office

people's commissariat. He was obviously preoccupied with something and did not hide it.

"Dmitry Fyodorovich," he declared excitedly, "your intervention is urgently needed!" - What's happened? - The

director of Arsenal just called from Kyiv. He said that the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine and the military council of the Southwestern Front decided to prepare the plant for evacuation. Requests where to send trains.

It should be said that by this time we had already figured out where we would place the factories supposed to be evacuated. In particular, Arsenal was supposed to be relocated to the Urals. But there has not yet been a decision on this issue. I called

N.A. Voznesensky. For him, my message also turned out to be unexpected.

"No factory," he said, "can be evacuated without government permission. This is the order, and no one is allowed to violate it. So explain to Kyiv. And for Arsenal, prepare a decision. Submit it to the Evacuation Board today. Specify in particular the dates of not only the beginning, but also the completion of the relocation, as well as the day when the plant should start producing products at the new location. I am especially concerned about whether the termination of the production of anti-aircraft platforms by Arsenal will affect the production of 37-mm guns? We need to think about how to make up for this loss. Do you have any ideas? - It is possible, Nikolai Alekseevich, to master the production of

platforms at the Kolomna Locomotive Plant. Very little preparation is required. Literally needed

day or two.

- Fine. Today at thirteen o'clock present the draft resolution of the Council of People's Commissars. I hung up the phone and turned to N.E. Nosovsky: -

Time is running out. It is urgent to prepare a draft resolution of the Council of People's Commissars on organizing the production of anti-aircraft platforms at the Kolomensky plant and a draft decision of the Council on the

evacuation of the Arsenal. I dictated to Nosovsky the main points of these documents, which I spoke about

Voznesensky. Nosovsky got up to leave, but I delayed him. - There is one more question to be solved. We will try to include in the government decree paragraph on the installation of three hundred 37-mm anti-aircraft guns on vehicles. Wait a minute.

It was necessary to coordinate the issue of anti-aircraft guns with N.D. Yakovlev. We had a preliminary conversation about this with him, and now, when I called him, Nikolai Dmitrievich immediately supported the proposal to include such a clause in the resolution. On the same day it was accepted by the government.

When Nosovsky left, I contacted the director of Arsenal, G.P. Shardin, reminded him of the procedure for making decisions on evacuation and warned him about the timing of relocation and the start of production at a new location.

- Plan the echelons in such a way that a consistent and quick installation of equipment is ensured. With the arrival of the last echelon, production should begin. Immediately dispatch a team of experienced and energetic specialists to the site to specifically coordinate issues related to the placement of equipment and people.

Instructions for the adoption and placement of the Arsenal were also given to the director of the base plant D.I. Firsov. To assist in organizing the evacuation, Petr Ivanovich Kalinushkin, a senior engineer of the main artillery department of the people's commissariat, went to Kyiv. A highly trained specialist, a good organizer, he subsequently rose to the head of the defense industry department of the State Planning Commission. The evacuation of the plant was carried

out in an organized manner, under the leadership of the headquarters headed by the director. The headquarters developed a schedule for the dismantling of equipment, determined the order and sequence of sending workshops and equipment. On June 29, the first echelon left Kyiv, and on August 14, the last, 36th. A total of 1100 wagons were sent. Together with the equipment, 2,500 workers, engineering and technical workers and employees were evacuated. All material assets were taken out completely. G.P. Chardin left with the last echelon. But since Arsenal

merged with the base plant, he was seconded to Perm, to a machine-building plant in the Motovilikha region, as a shop manager. From there, Chardin volunteered for the front. In 1943, we tracked down Grigory Pavlovich and recalled him from the front. He became the director of one of the major arms factories.

In the autumn of 1941, I visited the plant, where, in addition to the Kyiv Arsenal, two more enterprises were located. In the mechanical assembly shop, where we came with a group of comrades, we were met by the head of the shop, S.V. Gusovsky is a young, about twenty-five, engineer. He gave the impression of a thoughtful, thorough man. I asked to tell about the life of the workshop, its needs and concerns.

"We've been here for three months now," Gusovsky said. - Our train came from Kyiv for six and a half days. On the seventh day, they immediately set about installing the equipment. -

How was it installed? -

Manually. Rolled and moved with the help of crowbars and pipes. Worked during the day and at night. The first span of the shop began to work in three days.

"Yes, they did a heroic job here," the director of the plant confirmed.

"Introduce me to the best worker, Comrade Gusovsky," I asked. - With the best? -

the head of the shop asked in embarrassment. - So we have a very large workshop - 1200 people. Everyone is working diligently. It's hard to single out anyone. "Then show the one you like the most," I laughed. The foreman took me to the turner, who was just processing the breech. That named himself: Grigory Yakovlevich Tsarik.

- How is work, Comrade Tsarik? - All

right, Comrade Commissar. -

How do you fulfill the norm?

- 600 percent. - Every day?

– Yes, every day. -

Does marriage happen often? No, there is no such thing as marriage.

– Are you tired? -

Anything can happen. G.Ya. Tsarik was a turner of the highest qualification, one of the true masters of his affairs. He was instructed to produce the most critical parts. - Well,

how did you get settled with housing after the evacuation?

“It’s not bad, Comrade People’s Commissar, I can say. Military time.

- But still? -

Yes, in our hut the owners have a couch and wooden bunks. Two daughters sleep on a couch, and my wife Vera Mitrofanovna and I sleep on the bunk. They fenced off their “room” with a sheet. After all, besides us, two more families live in the hut. The hosts are kind, we live together. So nothing. The main thing is to beat the Nazis as soon as possible!

We went further down the workshop aisle. -

You have good people in your workshop, Comrade

Gusovsky. - Very good, Comrade Commissar! the shop manager responded.

Pride sounded in his voice, and I thought that this young engineer, apparently, is a good production commander, since he speaks of his subordinates in such a way. And, as it turned out later, he was not mistaken. I had to meet with Sergei Vladimirovich Gusovsky more than once both during the war years and after it. He grew into a major production manager, became a Hero of Socialist Labor, a laureate of the State Prize of the USSR, a deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR, and until the last day of his life successfully led the Arsenal Plant production association.

We widely used the experience of relocating Arsenal, and then our other enterprises, during the evacuation of the bulk of factories and institutions, which was carried out later, in October 1941. To resolve issues related to the evacuation, a special headquarters was created in the People's Commissariat, headed by V.M. Ryabikov.

In accordance with the requirement of the Evacuation Council, we developed a plan for the relocation of enterprises and institutions from the threatened zone, and communicated preliminary instructions to the plants in advance. They determined the procedure for organizing and conducting evacuation, dismantling of equipment, its packaging, loading, transportation and installation. Measures were envisaged for the transportation and provision of people along the way, for the equipment of wagons for them (bunks, steps, water tanks, iron stoves, etc.), and the organization of service in echelons. The whereabouts of the echelons were reported daily to the people's commissariat. It was established that the director of the evacuated plant can go to the new base only with the permission of the people's commissar, after the completion of the dispatch of people and equipment. This requirement also applied to design bureaus, research and design institutes of the people's commissariat.

The management of factories scheduled for evacuation was obliged to submit evacuation plans to the People's Commissariat, to carry out the necessary preparatory work and reconnaissance of new bases. Factory evacuation plans before their approval were carefully studied in the headquarters and departments. Particular attention was paid to the correct determination of the number and type of wagons (platforms), the order of dispatch of equipment and workshops, to the calculation of the time required for evacuation and restoration of production at a new location.

The evacuation of defense plants from Moscow and the Moscow region took place in an organized and accurate manner during the days when fierce battles unfolded on the outskirts of the capital. In early October, enemy strike groups managed to break through the defenses of the Soviet troops. On October 3, Orel was abandoned, and three days later Bryansk. There was a threat of an exit of the enemy to Moscow. On October 7, late in the evening, I was invited to a meeting of the Evacuation Council. - The State Defense

Committee, - said N.M. Shvern timer, decided to

evacuation of a number of defense enterprises from Moscow, the Moscow region and Tula. The proposals of the People's Commissariat for Armaments on new bases for accommodating artillery, rifle, cartridge factories, design institutes and design bureaus are being approved. But there are some clarifications for optical factories. In particular, one of the plants is proposed to be divided and evacuated not to Novosibirsk, but to Sverdlovsk and Uralsk. What do you say about this, Comrade Ustinov?

- I ask you to approve our proposal, - I got up. - The division of the plant will create great difficulties, require additional equipment and will inevitably push back the launch date at the new location. Our similar enterprises were sent to Novosibirsk from several cities. They have already started work. This will help speed up the commissioning of the plant and facilitate the organization and maintenance of optical production.

- And what about the placement of people and production facilities? This is exactly what the Evacuation Council had in mind when they proposed to divide the plant and change the place of its relocation," N.M. objected. Shvern timer. "As for

the conditions of accommodation," I replied, "we, Nikolai Mikhailovich, have already worked out this issue with the secretary of the Novosibirsk Regional Committee M.I. Kulagin. We are allocated for the plant the buildings of the Institute of Transport Engineers, Kuzbassugol, Regional Consumer Union, Glavunivermag, hotels, Sibzapzologo, the auto garage of the regional administration and other premises. We ask the Evacuation Board to temporarily close the Institute of Transportation Engineers with an early graduation. In addition, we are asking for permission from the Novosibirsk Oblast Executive Committee to close 15 schools so that workers can be accommodated in them. In addition to this, we will immediately launch the construction of barracks and dugouts, for which the necessary people and funds are sent there. We will temporarily accommodate family members of the evacuated workers in rural areas located near the city. Apparently, my arguments were convincing. There were no objections. "Good," said N.M. Shvern timer. - We agree with the proposal of the People's Commissariat. Start

evacuating factories immediately. For the first five days, you are allocated 500 wagons daily.

Unfortunately, we can't select more. But allow downtime. Use the wagons in a businesslike way. Report on the progress of the evacuation daily. We have given instructions to the secretaries of the regional and regional committees of the CPSU(b) and the chairmen of the executive committees on providing the arriving workers and members of their families with housing and meals.

- Nikolai Mikhailovich, - I got up again, - there is one more request. I ask you to instruct the People's Commissar of Trade on the organization of catering along the route of the echelons. It is necessary to exclude the possibility of a repetition of cases similar to what happened with one of the Leningrad factories. - What is the case? Shvern timer asked.

- The factory train was delayed for several days at the Unzha junction of the Northern Highway. All stocks of food in the echelon ran out. And there were no products at the junction. With the nutrition of people, an extremely difficult, one might say, catastrophic situation has arisen.

A clause was included in the resolution of the Council for the Evacuation, obliging the People's Commissariat of Trade to provide food for the evacuated workers and their families for the entire duration of the journey. echelons.

Returning from the meeting of the Council, I gathered the leadership of the People's Commissariat, announced the government's decision and measures for the timely and organized evacuation. For the direct management of the evacuation to the largest factories, the deputies of the people's commissar and the heads of the main departments B.L. Vannikov, I.A. Mirzakanov, N.G. Kostygov, I.P. Karasev, A.N. Sergeev.

At the same time, some of the leading workers of the People's Commissariat (V.N. Novikov, N.E. Nosovsky, B.I. Kanevsky and others) were sent to new bases to ensure timely installation and start-up of the evacuated factories. To the Deputy People's Commissar N.D. Ageev was assigned personal responsibility for the timely preparation of those under construction

objects in new locations. Even before the start of the evacuation of factories, teams of fitters, technologists and designers were sent there to prepare layouts and ensure an accelerated pace of equipment installation. Head of the transport department N.M. Denisov was charged

with the duty to monitor and report to me on a daily basis the progress of loading, supply and dispatch of wagons with equipment, materials and people of the evacuated enterprises and the promotion echelons.

On October 8, equipment was dismantled and loaded onto platforms. It was hard to destroy what had recently been created. I was constantly in the factories in those days and saw how many workers were crying, removing the machines from the foundations. I especially remember October 13th. Early in the morning

I arrived at one of the Moscow factories. The weather was bad. It was raining lightly. The director of the plant met me at the plant management. Hello. - What is the situation at the plant? - The situation is unimportant, or

rather, difficult. - Why? - The workers say: "We will not surrender Moscow!" And they don't want to leave. They say that we must defend the capital with all our might, and not abandon it, it's better, they say, to die here in battles than somewhere else drive.

- Where do such sentiments come from? You explained to people why and for what purpose evacuation? According to your report, no. Let's go to the shops. And invite a party organizer with you.

In the workshops, workers packed pieces of equipment and tools into boxes. They worked somehow sluggishly, even gloomily. I talked with the heads of workshops, with some foremen and workers. During these conversations, the director and the party organizer of the Central Committee of the All-Union

Communist Party of Bolsheviks were next to me at the plant. After

visiting the third or fourth shop, I said: - It is quite obvious that you started the evacuation of the plant without a convincing explanation to the people of its urgent need. Let's fix your mistakes. Gather a plant-wide rally. Half an hour

later, people gathered in the assembly shop. "Comrades,"

I turned to them, "the evacuation of the plant is not being carried out because Moscow will allegedly be surrendered to the enemy. No! All measures are being taken to protect the capital. We will fight for her to the last drop of blood. But on the outskirts of Moscow, the situation is now very difficult. The enemy aims strikes at the factories. Disruption of their work deprives the army of the weapons it needs. By removing the factories from the enemy's blows, we will ensure in the shortest possible time the growing production of weapons. So, evacuation is needed, needed for victory. The party and the government believe that the workers of the capital and the Moscow region will show examples of revolutionary consciousness, carry out the evacuation in an organized and quick manner, and in the new place will give the front even more weapons!

The speeches of factory comrades at the rally showed that the mood in the team had changed. People understood that evacuation was necessary. We must pay tribute to the leadership, the party committee of the plant. They were able to quickly reorganize and mobilize the team for friendly, selfless work. This allowed the plant to produce the first batch of anti-aircraft guns in a new place in two months.

And the situation at the front continued to deteriorate. On October 14, fascist German troops captured Kaluga and broke into Kalinin. The State Defense

Committee decided to speed up the evacuation of defense plants from Moscow and the Moscow region, as well as to transfer part of the party and government institutions and the diplomatic corps to Kuibyshev. On October 15, I was summoned to the Kremlin, where I also met other people's commissars. Gathered in the meeting room of the Council of People's Commissars. After a short wait, V.M. entered. Molotov said without any preamble:

"Today, all people's commissars must leave Moscow for the places designated for placement of their people's commissariats according to the evacuation plan.

Someone asked what to do if the people's commissariat has not yet relocated to a new location. The answer came: anyway, leave today, and entrust the evacuation of the people's commissariat to one of the deputies.

Our People's Commissariat was originally planned to be evacuated to Izhevsk, then to Kirov. But by mid-October, it became clear that Izhevsk was already overpopulated, and communications from Kirov with factories in the central part of the country and in the Volga region were not reliable enough. Therefore, as early as October 13, I applied to the State Defense Committee with a request to place the apparatus of the People's Commissariat, headed by V.M. Ryabikov in Perm. In Moscow, he asked to keep the task force with the relevant personnel, a total of 80 people,

with him¹⁴. The State Defense Committee approved the draft resolution submitted by us. The People's Commissariat for Armaments was in Perm for about four months. Its main part returned to the capital after the defeat of the Nazi troops near Moscow, on the 24th anniversary of the Red Army.

Together with other families, my wife and two children also left for Perm. Taisiya Alekseevna worked there. There she joined the party. A small

operational group of the People's Commissariat for Armaments was also in Kuibyshev, where the government was instructed to represent N.A. Voznesensky. By the end

of 1941, 80 percent of all arms industry enterprises had been evacuated. About 54,000 units of various equipment, including almost 40,000 metal-cutting machines, were taken out of the factories. About 150,000 people have moved to new bases. Many factories were evacuated to similar enterprises, with which they usually merged. But the equipment

had to be installed most often in unfinished and non-production premises. Many factories were located on the territories of civilian enterprises and in various buildings and utility rooms unsuitable for production. The deployment of production at new bases took place in difficult conditions. Sometimes the equipment was installed in the open air, and production began even before the construction of the workshops was completed.

All this work was carried out in conditions of rainy, cold autumn and very frosty winter.

At the end of 1941, I arrived in the Urals, at the plant named after M.I. Kalinin. It was forty degrees below zero. But the workshops worked. They worked in the open air - there were no roofs. At the majority of machines on the turned over boxes - teenagers. In the aisles there were "gornushkas" - as the workers called round metal boxes with holes for traction. Gornushki were heated around the clock. The guys warmed up near them, when the frost got really hot, and again got down to business ... It was the same in other

places. Despite the unthinkable difficulties, all the hardships and hardships, in spite of everything, already a month and a half after the relocation, the plants began to produce products. But still they did not work for a month and a half. Of course, we took into account the expected decrease in the production of weapons in connection with the evacuation and submitted the relevant data to the State Defense Committee. For example, in the last quarter of 1941, the production of 25-mm and 37-mm anti-aircraft automatic guns was expected to decrease by 2500, 7.62-mm self-loading rifles and submachine guns by more than 450 thousand, machine guns - by 24 thousand, gun, aviation sights and panoramas - for 35 thousand, artillery compass and stereo tubes - for 5400¹⁵.

¹⁴ Central State Archive of the National Economy of the USSR (hereinafter TsGANKh). F. 8157. He. 1. D. 767. L. 163.

¹⁵ TsGANKh. F. 8157. On. 1. D. 761. L. 210-212.

These calculations made it possible for the State Defense Committee to realistically plan the provision of weapons to formations and units of the Red Army and the conduct of operations at the front, taking into account the reduction in the output of military products. It started in October and dropped to a low in November. But already in December, the fall was suspended. And from the beginning of 1942, its general growth was outlined, which then did not decrease throughout the war.

The military-industrial potential of the eastern regions of the country was growing rapidly. Only in the first six months of the war, 1523 industrial enterprises, including more than 1360 large ones, were transferred to the Volga region, the Urals, Western and Eastern Siberia, Kazakhstan and Central Asia. The deployment and commissioning of hundreds of evacuated enterprises gave a tremendous boost to the development of the economic base, the creation of which in the East of the country began during the years of the first five-year plans. Here, cooperation between enterprises was established, available resources of raw materials and materials were developed and involved in production, and large-scale capital work was launched. All the main stocks of metal, materials, equipment and tools went here.

In general, by the middle of 1942, the restructuring of the national economy on a war footing was completely completed. This transformation took about a year. For comparison, it can be said that in the USA and England, despite the fact that in these countries the conditions for economic mobilization were favorable, and American soil was not affected by the war at all, the transfer of industry to war footing took much longer. Thus, the socialist economy, based on public ownership of tools and means of production and having a planned character, has demonstrated its incomparably higher stability and mobility. In the incredibly difficult conditions of the first period of the war imposed on the Soviet Union, it convincingly proved its enormous advantages over the capitalist economy.

Most clearly, these advantages were shown by evacuation. Undoubtedly, this is one of the most dramatic and glorious pages of the heroic epic of the Great Patriotic War. It was necessary to dismantle, often under artillery fire and continuous bombing, tens and hundreds of thousands of pieces of equipment. It was necessary to load this equipment into trains and deliver it - often also under intense enemy air raids - to a destination many thousands of kilometers away. One and a half million wagons with equipment, raw materials, fuel, people went to the East. Over 10 million people were evacuated. But it was still necessary to unload these echelons, install equipment, accommodate people, organize their life and work. And all this in an unimaginably short time frame. The enemy's hopes that by occupying a part of the territory and disabling the industry of the western and central regions of the USSR, it would be possible to disorganize the country's economic life and disrupt the supply of the army and navy in operation, failed.

The successful evacuation, the rapid commissioning of a huge industrial complex in the East - this was a major economic victory for the Soviet Union. A victory won at the most difficult stage of the war for us and in many respects predetermined the coming defeat of fascist Germany. Overcoming incredible difficulties, the Soviet people put into practice the program worked out by the Party for the restructuring of the national economy on a war footing. In this difficult time, the high patriotism of the Soviet people - soldiers and home front workers, their unbending spiritual stamina, devotion to socialism, and solidarity around the party, manifested itself with unprecedented strength. Probably, there is a regularity in the fact that, speaking of

the Great Patriotic War, we try to find the most significant, most sublime words. After all, the time in question is truly heroic. Heroic without any discounts and reservations, although then, during the war, people, of course, did not think about exploits, did not consider their deeds and deeds heroic. They worked. They worked conscientiously. They gave all their strength to the task that they were entrusted with, and, if necessary, their lives. Otherwise, they did not know how to act and could not. Because they knew that this was the only way to bring Victory closer.

Stop the enemy

From the first days of the war, all our deeds and thoughts were subordinated to the fulfillment of the Party's mandate: "Everything for the front, everything for victory!" The battle with the enemy required a huge amount of weapons and ammunition. And it was necessary to use all the possibilities, all the reserves to increase production at the factories of the people's commissariat, to organize the production of weapons at the enterprises transferred to us for mobilization, to achieve the fastest commissioning of the evacuated enterprises and backup plants. In mid-July 1941, I was summoned by I.V. Stalin. He looked very tired. The whites of the eyes were visibly yellowish. Whiskey was thickly silvered with gray

hair. He said that the situation at the front was difficult. Left Smolensk and Chisinau. On the Leningrad and Kiev directions - heavy defensive battles. As a result of enemy bombing attacks on enterprises, the production of certain types of weapons is disrupted. Therefore, there was an urgent need for its duplication. In particular, Stalin directly raised the question of building a backup plant for the production of 20-mm aircraft guns, suggested that the State Planning Commission be consulted and the agreed considerations be reported to him.

The next day I reported to I.V. Stalin that it would be expedient to place a backup plant for the production of a 20-mm aircraft gun in the Volga region, near one of the large aviation enterprises, on the basis of a gas engine plant under construction there. It will be necessary to transfer it to the People's Commissariat for Armaments and to allocate an additional several thousand builders. He asked for permission to report later on the timing of commissioning and the necessary equipment.

Soon a resolution of the Central Committee of the Party and the Council of People's Commissars on this issue was adopted. I asked my deputy for capital construction, Nikolai Dmitrievich Ageev, to go to the site and, as accurately as possible, determine the volume, timing, needs of the construction site, and organize the work. With his characteristic energy, Ageev set to work. The regional committee of the party rendered effective assistance to him. Soon, construction began on a broad front. More than 5,000 people worked at the

construction site daily. The construction of the production buildings progressed rapidly. One of them, with an area of 13,000 square meters, the builders undertook to hand over in two, and the second, approximately the same, in three weeks. With the equipment, things were worse. Calculations showed that the new plant would need about one and a half thousand machine tools. Where to get them? The machine tool factories have essentially stopped supplying machine tools. We could take some of them from the enterprises of our People's Commissariat, provided that the production of certain types of weapons was transferred to other plants. But we could not fully satisfy the needs from our own

resources. I reported this to I.V. Stalin again. He expressed satisfaction with the pace of construction and asked: - And what kind of way out with the machines do you offer? - It is necessary to load the machine-tool factories for their intended purpose. Do not give them extraneous orders until they fully satisfy the needs of the defense factories in machine tools.

Stalin immediately called A.I. Mikoyan.

"Comrade Mikoyan," he said, "this is where Comrade Ustinov and I are solving the issue of launching a very necessary plant. It's all about the machines. There is none of them. I ask you to carefully study this issue and report on the decision along with the plan for the fourth quarter.

Somewhat ahead of events, I note that our proposal was taken into account in the quarterly national economic plan and this, of course, affected the solution of the problem with machine tools. But still, in 1941 it was very acute. To solve it, it was necessary to find and use any possibilities. In this regard, I recall the story of the director of the artillery plant A.S. Yelyana about

how he and the chief engineer of the plant M.Z. Olevsky produced machine tools in Tula. Having learned that in the most difficult situation in which the city is located, machines are not used at a number of enterprises, they turned to the secretary of the Tula Regional Party Committee V.G. Zhavoronkov for permission to take them to the artillery factory. Zhavoronkov, who headed the city defense committee, listened to the request and asked angrily: "Listen, dear

comrades, do you at least know that the Nazis are only a few hundreds of meters, we are continuously fired upon?

"Of course we do. But we are asking for your help. Machines that you do not use now are desperately needed for the production of guns. - Can you take them out? -

Zhavoronkov cooled down somewhat. At this time, he was apparently distracted by the ringing of another phone. Zhavoronkov gave some orders, and then returned to the interrupted conversation: "Are you listening to me?" - Yes Yes! - So, if you need it, then we will

give it. -

And, as if once again confirming the thought expressed in a conversation with the one to whom he had just given orders, Zhavoronkov rapped out: - The Tula proletariat will not allow the Nazis to enter Tula. Will not allow! So come and take the machines. Tulyaki will help you load and send. Let our machines serve the common cause. Let's have more guns. At the plant, the old Tula machines were modernized and subsequently successfully used both as

operating machines and as a basis for creating special and aggregate

machine tools.

But let me return to the conversation in Stalin's office. "You will receive the machines," he said, after talking with A.I. Mikoyan. - And how many cannons do you expect to give a month?

"Two thousand, Comrade Stalin.

Today, I think we can agree with this. But production is necessary ramp up. Our aircraft manufacturing capabilities are growing.

Stalin retained the draft resolution of the State Defense Committee presented by me. On the next day the project was approved.

And already in the third quarter of 1941, the new plant began to produce products. At the same time, other factories were put into operation, new production facilities were created on the basis of enterprises that produced peaceful products before the war. As a result, in the second half of 1941, the number of factories producing small arms increased three times, cartridges - two and a half, mortars - five times.

Important for the creation of new industries in a short time was the fact that even in the prewar period, the armaments industry, in accordance with the Party's guidelines, developed in an integrated manner and, in particular, had its own solid metallurgical base. We had a powerful and comprehensively developed production of special high-quality tool steels, special profile and sheet products, forging and pressing equipment adapted for complex metal processing. In essence, large artillery and weapons-machine-gun factories personified the associations of metallurgy and mechanical engineering, which ensured the large-scale production of forgings, stampings and other metallurgical blanks. And this is the most important prerequisite for the high mobilization readiness of the armaments industry and the increase in the output of its products.

But the material and technical base by itself, no matter how strong and developed it may be, is not able to ensure success. People are the main, decisive force of production. And above all, thanks to their selfless work, an increasing output of products for the front was ensured. Ivan Dmitrievich Mikhailov, who headed the party committee of the Bolshevik plant in 1941-1943, a thorough man who knows the value of words and has seen a lot in his lifetime, once told me about such an incident. At the end of 1942, a delegation of soldiers from the Volkhov Front arrived at the plant. They visited the assembly, leading

mechanical, steel-packing, rolling and forging shops, talked with workers. Many of the warriors, until quite recently, also worked at machine tools, presses, and dealt with metal processing. And because the

conversation was interested and mutually understandable. Before parting, one of the guests said: - They say that

you work in the rear ... What kind of rear is this? Every now and then bombing, shelling. The cold is to the bone - the fascist has made some holes in the roof and walls. There is also nothing to talk about food and clothes. And you work day and night no matter what. So what is the rear? Does not look like it! Is that right, comrades? He turned to his colleagues, and they hummed in agreement. "Right, it doesn't look like it at all. You have the same front, and, perhaps, even more complicated

than ours. Saying goodbye to the workers, the fighters shook them with special gratitude and respect hands...

Yes, during the war the rear - and, of course, not only as close to the front as in Leningrad, but throughout the country - was, in essence, the same front. As at the front, the workers showed genuine courage, contempt for death, courage and intelligence, resourcefulness and ingenuity, selflessness and the will to win. The chronicle of those days is filled with examples of selflessness and heroism. And invariably at the very forefront of struggle and labor were the communists.

I will give a short excerpt from the minutes of the meeting of the party activists of the city of Izhevsk, held on October 8, 1941. In his speech, Secretary of the Udmurt Regional Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks I.F. Kutyavin spoke about the communists - workers of one of the weapons factories: "... a member of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, a steelmaker Comrade Skoryev, gives heat for 7 hours 30 minutes instead of 9 hours. A team where a member of the CPSU (b) assistant steelworks comrade works. Abdrakhmanov, gives swimming trunks for 7 hours instead of 9 hours according to the norm. The brigade works just as well, where the steelworker's assistant is Comrade Surnin, a member of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks ... Most of the communists working directly in production show examples of Stakhanov's work. For example, Comrade Malykh, a member of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, a milling machine operator, works in the fixtures section, is a Stakhanovite, and daily exceeds the production norms. The party's candidate, cutter comrade Buivolov, was the first to master the production rate and now he is fulfilling it by 140-150 percent. Comrade Merzlyakov, a member of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, was appointed senior foreman to a lagging section, and recently this section has begun to overfulfill the schedule.

This is how communists worked everywhere, in every brigade, in every section, in every workshop. The will, labor, dedication of the Soviet people did literally miracles during the war years. One more of the many confirmations of this comes to mind. At the end of 1941, in order to establish the production of weapons, it was urgently necessary to re-equip a number of machine tools at some factories. For this, several dozens of special bearings were needed. I called Anatoly Alexandrovich Gromov, at that time the chief engineer, and in fact the head of the 1st Moscow State Bearing Plant.

- Anatoly Alexandrovich, help me out. We desperately need bearings. - and I called bearing output.

"Dmitry Fyodorovich," Gromov answered, "we are glad to help you. But how? You know our position. We are setting up the production of special products. There is virtually no bearing production. We simply cannot physically manufacture bearings.

"Can't you find some way out?" To be honest, we strongly counted on you. Perhaps you can still find a way to solve the problem? You understand how important this is. Consult with specialists, with workers. After all, you have excellent masters. - We have masters, Dmitry

Fedorovich, but they are not gods either!

¹⁶ Party archive of the Udmurt regional committee of the CPSU. F. 54. Op. 2. D. 1583. L. 1-2.

They are more than gods. Try to contact them, state our request.
I'm sure they will respond. Give bearings - and the front will receive an extremely necessary weapon.

- All right, Dmitry Fyodorovich, today I will talk with my comrades. Let's try ... And if there is even the slightest opportunity, we will definitely do it. Everyone who is even

slightly familiar with the production of bearings knows how difficult its technology is, what complex and precise equipment it requires. My engineering experience told me almost unequivocally: it was impossible to manufacture the bearings we needed in the then situation at GPZ-1. But at the same time, the experience of practical work with people suggested that they would find an opportunity to manufacture these bearings at the plant. After all, they are needed to produce weapons that the front needs. And for this, even the impossible

becomes possible.

And so it happened. The toolmakers showed remarkable ingenuity, applied a very complex, I would say, even ingenious bypass technology and made the necessary bearings. The work was done outside of school hours. Professional workers and engineers of the plant's tool shop took part in it. The guild party organization took patronage over our order.

A few days later A.A. Gromov said that the bearings were ready, and I thanked him from the bottom of my heart. It is a pity that the names of those who participated in this unique, without any exaggeration, technical and production operation, have not been preserved in memory.

In general, in those days we had to solve many organizational, technical and other issues in an extremely limited time frame. Most of them were caused by the unforeseen difficult situation of the initial period, but there were also those that were the result of short-sighted, or even simply wrong, ill-considered steps taken on the eve of the war. Such a step was taken at the insistence of the leadership of the GAU of the People's Commissariat of Defense, and in particular Marshal G.I. Kulik, a few months before the start of the war, the production of 45-mm and 76-mm guns was stopped. I already mentioned this, but here I want to tell you how the production of these weapons was restored. In the heavy battles of the first days and weeks of the war, 45-mm to 76-mm guns proved their high

efficiency in the fight against enemy tanks. They were badly needed by the warring troops, as well as the newly formed formations and units, divisions of the people's militia, separate artillery and machine-gun battalions.

That is why on July 12, 1941, the State Defense Committee decided to restore the production of 45-mm and 76-mm guns. It was necessary to resume the production of these systems at the factories where they were manufactured earlier and where the necessary base was available, to organize production at a number of other military and some civilian enterprises. All the necessary technical documentation was handed over to the newly attracted enterprises to reduce the time for mastering production. As for the factories that produced 45-mm and 76-mm guns before the war, their stocks of technological equipment, blanks and relevant documentation allowed them to quickly expand production. But still, at first we could not meet the rapidly growing demand for these systems. With requests to the State Defense Committee, Headquarters, the People's Commissariat of Defense, the military, secretaries of regional committees, city committees addressed.

One late night at the end of July, I returned from one of the factories. I had just entered the office, when I.A. looked in the door. Mirzakhanov. A communist with pre-revolutionary experience, Illarion Avetovich was a veteran of the armaments industry, headed large factories, then one of the leading heads of the people's commissariat, and since 1940 he worked as a deputy people's commissar. Mirzakhanov looked extremely upset. – What happened, Illarion

Avetovich? "Comrade Stalin called me," he

replied. And he told about the conversation I.V. Stalin

with P.N. Goremykin, which took place the day before. Stalin sharply raised the question of why at the beginning of the war our army found itself without the main artillery systems, referring to the discontinuation of 45-mm and 76-mm guns.

Goremykin explained that this was a proposal from the Main Artillery Directorate of the People's Commissariat of Defense. Due to the objections of the People's Commissariat of Armaments, this issue was considered three times in the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks and was decided in favor of the military. Stalin demanded that proposals be submitted to correct the situation, and in connection with this, I.A. was summoned. Mirzakhanov.

Illarion Avetovich warned that I.V. Stalin intends to call me. I didn't have to wait long for a call. On July 30 I got a call from I.V. Stalin

said: - The State Defense Committee received a

report from Marshal Kulik that 330 45-mm anti-tank guns and 200 76-mm anti-tank guns are missing to provide artillery weapons to the newly formed rifle divisions in the first half of August. Kulik writes that they can only be obtained by increasing supplies from industry. There are no other resources.

Stalin was silent. His breath could be heard over the telephone receiver. I waited patiently, knowing that he often made such pauses, considering some new thought that arose in him in connection with what he had said. Indeed, Stalin continued:

- Quite recently, Kulik, and Tymoshenko, reported to me something completely different. They assured us that we had enough guns of these calibers in abundance. They asked to stop their production ... But for this demand from them. You, Comrade Ustinov, need to carefully consider your options for increasing the supply of these guns to the army. Do it quickly and report to me personally.

Without accurate and reasonable calculations, go to I.V. Stalin couldn't. He once emphasized that now there is a war and every people's commissar of the defense industry must be constantly ready to give a clear answer, how much and what kind of weapons he has today, tomorrow and the day after tomorrow. Stalin entered the most important data in a small notebook, which he constantly kept with him. Having prepared the necessary materials, I went to Kirov Street, where the

Headquarters was located in a small mansion and Stalin worked. Meetings of the GKO, the Headquarters and the Politburo of the Central Committee took place in his office without an official procedure for the end of the work of one body and the start of another. Apparently, they were already waiting for me, because A.N. Poskrebyshch

immediately invited me to go to the office. After the usual greeting, Stalin said: - Well, comrades, let's listen to the People's

Commissar of Armaments, what can he report on

antitank artillery.

- The arms industry, - I began, - will not be able to supply the troops with the number of artillery systems named by Marshal Kulik within the specified period. The plant, which used to produce 45-mm guns, was evacuated to the East. The tool and the blanks left after the cessation of production in January of this year are still on the way. At the new location, production may not begin until the end of September. - And why can't the factories that are not evacuated, in particular Elyan,

fulfill the order? - The plant is restoring the production of the 76-mm USV divisional gun, comrade

Stalin. But we will not be able to cover the needs of the front within the period named by Kulik.

I substantiated the specific dates for the commissioning of capacities for the production of 45-mm and 76-mm guns at the enterprises of the People's Commissariat and the approximate figures for increasing the total volume of their production. After listening to me, Stalin was silent for quite a long time, and then, without addressing anyone,

he said: "Now it is clear that by curtailing the established production of mass consumption tools before the war, even before the full development of the samples coming to replace them, we made a serious mistake, one might say, unforgivable miscalculation. It is, of course, extremely difficult to determine exactly when the war will begin. However, our decision was short-sighted. Perhaps now is not the time to look for the culprits. Our troops need

anti-tank weapons. Therefore, it is necessary at any cost to ensure their release in sufficient quantities. This is the main task now. I ask the People's Commissariat for Armaments and the State Planning Commission to submit a schedule for the daily production of anti-tank guns by factories every month. We will monitor the implementation of the schedule and ask strictly.

I had to report to I.V. Stalin on the implementation of production schedules. He sometimes reacted quite sharply to their violations. When, for example, in September, one of the Ural factories did not fulfill an order for the production of guns, Stalin immediately sent a telegram to the director of the factory and the party organizer of the Central Committee, sternly warning them of responsibility. This telegram stirred up the entire plant, and there were no more cases of violation of the schedule.

Draft GKO resolutions on the production of 45-mm and 76-mm guns were developed by us for each month together with the armaments department of the State Planning Commission. The production of guns grew rapidly. Already in August it was six, and in September - eleven and a half times higher than in July. However, in October, due to the beginning of the evacuation, production was somewhat reduced. Difficulties arose in its planning. Therefore, in November, N.A. Voznesensky demanded that a draft resolution be prepared three months in advance. I especially remember the consideration of this draft at the GKO meeting.

For a month the capital was under siege. Bloody battles went on near approaches to Moscow. The evacuation of enterprises continued.

Stalin became even more haggard and hunched over. After reading the draft, he said: - In the first paragraph, it must be indicated that the production of anti-tank guns is of exceptional, I emphasize, exceptional importance for our army. Write it down. And since this is so, it is necessary, in addition, to write down that at the factories involved in the production of guns, additional centralized funds should be allocated monthly for each worker: flour - 10 kilograms; cereals and fish, 2 kilograms each; sugar - 1 kilogram; tobacco - 100 grams. In closed canteens, sell 200 grams of bread without cards. - He walked around the office, lighting his pipe, and slowly dictated again: - Make it incumbent on the secretaries of the regional committees: Sverdlovsky - Andrianov, Stalingrad - Chuyanov, Molotovskiy - Gusarov, Gorkovskiy - Rodionov, Udmurtskiy - Chekinov, Yaroslavskiy - Patolichov - to daily engage in the work of factories manufacturing 45mm anti-tank and 76mm SPM divisional guns; provide all possible assistance in the implementation of this resolution and report to the State Defense Committee on the progress of the program every ten days.

Stalin came up to the table, read what was written over my shoulder and continued:

"Write down one more point. The State Defense Committee warns all people's commissars and factory directors of the sole responsibility for the implementation of this decree and for the uninterrupted supply of artillery factories of the People's Commissariat for Armaments and establishes that failure to fulfill orders for the production of 45-mm and 76-mm guns will be considered by the State Defense Committee as a state crime. The decision was immediately retyped

on a typewriter. Having signed it, Stalin said: - Now take measures to implement the decree.

Let us know how it goes

its implementation.

In accordance with the decision of the State Defense Committee, an order was issued by the people's commissariat. In order to ensure the implementation of the program for the production of 45-mm and 76-mm guns, a number of orders were temporarily removed from the factories, including 25-mm and 85-mm anti-aircraft guns, a 57-mm anti-tank gun, a 107-mm mountain mortar and some other. Naturally, all technological equipment, equipment and semi-finished products for these orders were kept in full readiness.

In some publications, the issue of phasing out the 57-mm anti-tank gun (ZIS-2) at the end of 1941 is explained too simply, and sometimes incorrectly. The temporary cessation of the production of this artillery system was due to the critical situation at the beginning of the war. To repulse the enemy needed a large number

anti-tank guns. It was possible to ensure the release of their required quantity only using the already mastered and established technology. And she wasn't there at the time. I remember how in the twentieth of July 1941 N.A. Voznesensky put in front of me and Marshal G.I. Kulik, who, as Deputy Commissar of Defense, still continued to deal with weapons issues, the task was to study the prospects for organizing the production of a number of artillery systems, prototypes of which, including the 57-mm ZIS-2 anti-tank gun, were developed at the plant headed by A.S. Yelyan.

A review of samples was scheduled for July 22. It was held in the courtyard of the People's Commissariat of Defense. N.A. Voznesensky, V.A. Malyshev, Marshal G.I. Kulik, senior officials of our People's Commissariat. Explanations were given by the chief designer of the plant V.G. Grabin. After inspecting the guns, gun crews showed combat work on them. We all liked the prototypes. "Tell me, Vasily Gavrilovich," Marshal Kulik asked Grabina, "why

is the production of ZIS-2 going so slowly?" After all,

the gun was put into service and put into production in May. And the plant has so far issued a few units of guns. What's the matter? – The main reason is that the plant cannot properly master the production of the barrel due to its large length. When turning, the barrel bends. But I am sure that soon we will solve this

problem. "Your answer, Comrade Grabin," said N.A. Voznesensky, - once again confirms that the transition to mass production of a new system takes time. And we just don't have it. No matter how it turns out that in the pursuit of the best, we will lose the good we already

have and leave the army without the guns it needs. - Yes, now we need as many anti-tank guns as possible. Right now, not tomorrow, not in a month," Marshal Kulik spoke up. - Your "soon", Comrade Grabin, does not suit us. Therefore, the issue of the production of systems presented by the plant will have to be returned later. And now we need to devote all our efforts to the production of anti-tank guns that

have been mastered in production. - The approved program must be carried out unconditionally, - summed up N.A.

Voznesensky.

In our people's commissariat we organized a wide range of work and control over the implementation of the program for the production of 45-mm and 76-mm guns. B.L. went to the factories of the Urals and the Urals. Vannikov, I.A. Mirzakhanov, V.N. Novikov. N.P. Karasev and I went to the Volga region. Nikolai Pavlovich Karasev was in charge of personnel in the People's Commissariat. However, he was well versed in the production of weapons. Coming from a family of Yaroslavl workers, Karasev, as a teenager, began working as a locksmith, at the same time he studied at the evening workers' faculty, at the age of 19 he joined the CPSU (b). Nikolai Pavlovich graduated from the Mechanical Engineering Institute and the military-industrial department of the Naval Academy, was a foreman, engineer, designer at a defense plant, was elected secretary of the plant's party committee and secretary of the district party committee, and from 1939, until the transition in the spring of 1940 to the People's Commissariat of Arms, worked in the apparatus of the Central Committee of the CPSU (b).

Karasev went to one factory, and I went to another. Together with the director of the plant A.S. Elyan, party organizer of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks A.D. Proskurin and chief engineer M.Z. Olevsky went to the shops.

"This is our new machine shop," Yelyan said, pointing to a large, freshly built production building located not far from the plant administration. - Built in 26 days. Of course, they would not have managed it themselves, the construction team sent by you, Comrade People's Commissar, helped. Now the manufacture of recoil devices has ceased to be a bottleneck.

They walked around and examined this and other factory shops. I was at the plant for several days, tried to visit during this time everywhere both in the daytime and at night. A lot was given by conversations with workers and foremen, heads of sections and shops, technologists and designers. So, while gathering the management team for a meeting, I was, as they say,

fully equipped. The conversation led to the elimination of the backlog in the production of products, to the improvement of the organization of the entire

work of the team. The plant was the first among the artillery enterprises of the People's Commissariat to transfer the production of guns to a stream, actively introducing progressive technology. After a frank conversation with the management of the plant, the identification of unused reserves and the provision of the necessary assistance from the people's commissariat, the

implementation of the daily schedule became the norm. The thought of designers and technologists gave a lot to production. But in the conditions of war, when the measure of labor and time became different, when it was necessary to speed up production many times and increase its volume, this alone was not enough. It was necessary to mobilize the creative thought, initiative and energy of the working masses themselves, to inspire them to find ways to speed up the production of weapons, to increase the production volumes of those who worked directly at the machine tool, at the press or open-hearth. This is what we oriented the heads of enterprises, party, trade union and Komsomol organization

Already the first weeks and months of the war gave many examples of workers' initiative. Ivan Semenovitch Kurkov worked in the forging and pressing shop of the plant. A communist, a cadre worker, one of those who formed the backbone of the armaments industry, a blacksmith of the highest qualification, he possessed a discreet but extremely attractive force that involuntarily attracted people to him, gave special weight and significance to his every word. From the first days of the war, Ivan Semenovitch Kurkov began to forge 800 parts per shift, together with his assistant, instead of 350 according to the norm. And when the task of each hammer brigade was set to more than two thousand parts of guns per shift, he brought the output to three extra thousand.

More than once I had to see the work of people like Ivan Semenovitch, masters of their craft. By the way, there were a lot of them at armaments factories. What distinguished the masters, what was their handwriting? Their actions in the workplace were alien to haste, much less fussiness or haste. On the contrary, sometimes it seemed that they were even slow - their every movement was so prudent, verified, accurate. In any detail worked by them, they, one might say, put a piece of their soul. How generous the soul of a working man must be, so that everything that comes out from under his hands bears the stamp of mastery! Such was Ivan Semyonovitch Kurkov, or, as he was respectfully called,

Semenych. It is no coincidence that he became one of the first workers at the plant to be awarded the honorary title of Stakhanovite patriot and high awards of the Motherland for shock work. In 1942, he was awarded the Order of the Red Banner of Labor, and then the medal "For Labor Distinction". The same were the communist Mikhail Ivanovich Gudkov from the first machine shop, who bore ten to eleven barrels per shift instead of four on assignment, Ivan Apollonovitch Lisin, who brought the breech removal per shift to thirty instead of nine on assignment. This result was never surpassed by anyone until the very end of the war.

What was the basis of such truly phenomenal labor indicators? I think, first of all, responsibility, working ingenuity and high professional skills merged together. Mastering such a skill is, of course, not an easy task, requiring great organization, discipline, and purposefulness from a person. In this regard, I want to tell you about one of the remarkable workers who came to the plant as a teenager during the war years. Yesterday's fazeushnik, Alexander Tsarev, was, as they say, by no means a heroic build. But from workers with experience, especially from fellow Komsomol members, those who were a little older and more experienced than him, he did not want to lag behind for anything. And where there was a lack of knowledge, skills, or even just physical strength, he took with inquisitiveness, dexterity. At first, Sasha constantly bothered the elderly workers with his questions. They often grumbled, apparently even angrily, but they themselves gladly helped the inquisitive boy. And what? Very soon, Tsarev began not only to fulfill, but also significantly exceeded the norm, and subsequently became the foreman of one

from the best front-line teams of turners at the plant. From month to month, she successfully fulfilled the increased socialist obligations, instead of 2.2 monoblock guns, on average, she shot 5, and sometimes more, per shift.

Alexander Tsarev in 1944 was awarded the medal "For Labor Distinction". In the victorious year of 1945, the communists of the workshop unanimously accepted him into the party. And this fact seems to me especially significant. He sums up, as it were, the formation, professional maturation, and spiritual growth of a young man - all that the harsh wartime gave a special acceleration. The hardening received in the work collective during the war years, as a rule, determined and continues to determine not only the spiritual appearance, moral position of a person, but also his entire subsequent line of life.

By the way, in the postwar years, A.A. Tsarev graduated from the Polytechnic Institute on the job, became an engineer, worked at his native plant, first as a technologist, then as a shop manager, head of the pre-production department, deputy chief engineer, and in recent years, deputy director of the plant for quality. To his medal, received during the Great Patriotic War, were added the Order of the October Revolution and the Badge of Honor.

Good, right line of life! It is precisely this line, determined by an honest, responsible, conscientious attitude to public duty, to the task entrusted, to the duties of a Soviet citizen, that the overwhelming majority of people adhere to who went through the crucible of the Great Patriotic War and connected their lives with Lenin's party. After all, the fate of Alexander Andreevich Tsarev is a typical fate of the representatives of the generation that entered the working order during the war. Many veterans continue to

work successfully. Ivan Semenovich Kurkov - adjuster in the forge. During the war years, he made many rationalization proposals that made it possible to significantly increase labor productivity. For his many years of work, he submitted more than 400 rationalization proposals, which were introduced into production. In 1962, by the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR I.S. Kurkov was awarded the honorary title "Honored innovator of the RSFSR". Konstantin Nikolaevich Grishin, foreman of fitters, holder of the Order of Lenin, joined the party in the harsh year of 1944. A.T. Gordeev, V.D. Maksimenko, M.G. Eliseev, V.K. Krokhin, A.G. Alterman, V.V. Selikhov, V.S. Seliverstov, other comrades. Many representatives of this generation work in other factories and institutions. This is a real labor guard, the glory and pride of the teams!

What distinguishes our labor guard? Not just a responsible, selfless, but also a creative, proactive attitude to business. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that one without the other is simply unthinkable. And this was especially evident during the war years. I will say

once again about the enormous role played by the Party in the pre-war years, involving women in production, creating the necessary technical, production and other conditions for the use of their labor. From the very first days of the war, this began to give returns. Women successfully worked in the most responsible and difficult areas, mastered professions that from time immemorial were considered masculine. But the war has a different countdown ... Maria Nikolaevna Klimova, an employee of the electric power shop of the Bolshevik plant, a communist, became one of the first at the plant, if not in the entire industry, a turbomachinist. The wife of a front-line soldier, Claudia Vasilievna Levakova, worked as a senior stoker. Avgusta Grigorievna Sokolova mastered the profession of a gas generator, Anna Petrovna Andreeva became the electric saw operator for cutting hot metal ... Can you count all our wonderful workers who, in a terrible hour for the Motherland, stood on a par, shoulder to shoulder with men, shared with them the incredible burden of military hard times! And with all that, women remained mothers, mistresses, faithful fighting friends, gentle, caring, attentive, kind. With them, with the hope that they would definitely endure, endure everything, save, raise children, the ideas of front-line soldiers about the strength of the rear, their confidence that the rear

will not let you down. Is it not this deep, living in the innermost corners of a soldier's heart, confidence in their mothers, wives, sisters, daughters, like a life-giving key, nourished the stamina of the soldiers, their will to live, their optimism, not subject to even the most severe blows of military fate!

The selfless efforts of the Party, of the entire Soviet people, the systematic putting into operation of the capacities and resources created in advance, the purposeful use of the advantages of the political and economic organization of Soviet society - all this was bound to bear fruit. And these fruits became tangible by the end of 1941,

when in early December, Soviet troops launched a counteroffensive near Moscow and inflicted a major defeat on the enemy - the first for him in the entire Second World War. At the same time, blows were struck near Rostov and Tikhvin. The general offensive of the Red Army unfolded. She cleared the Moscow and Tula regions of the invaders, a number of districts of the Kalinin, Leningrad, Oryol and Smolensk regions. In some places, the enemy was driven back by more than 400 kilometers! The success of the offensive of the Red Army was facilitated by the saturation

of our troops with anti-tank and small arms weapons, the equipping of tanks with a sufficiently powerful and reliable gun. In the last two months of 1941 alone, more 45-mm and 76-mm divisional guns were produced than in the previous four months of the war.

Anti-tank guns played an important role in the fight against enemy tanks in the battle near Moscow and in other sectors of the Soviet-German front. The deployment of their mass production was carried out in a short time. As early as June 16, a week before the start of the war, N.A. Voznesensky asked how the refinement of N.V.'s anti-tank rifle was progressing. Rukavishnikov. -

Rukavishnikov complains that they put spokes in his wheels, - said Nikolai Alekseevich, - and the testers allegedly exaggerate the shortcomings of the system and simply find fault with it. So figure it out, Dmitry Fedorovich.

I asked I.A. Barsukov, who knew in detail everything related to the creation of an anti-tank rifle, to prepare the materials available in the People's Commissariat, including acts of field tests and the decision of the People's Commissariat of Defense. We talked with the designer himself. It turned out that after the anti-tank rifle N.V. Rukavishnikov continued to work on its improvement. But the last ground tests, conducted on June 23, 1941, still showed a significant percentage of delays in firing. Further refinement of the gun was required.

I reported all this to N.A. Voznesensky. He asked to provide Rukavishnikov with the necessary assistance in order to speed up the completion of the work. And soon Stalin spoke about the anti-tank rifle. It happened in early July, after one of the meetings of the State Defense Committee. "Timoshenko and

Kulik," Stalin said, "applied with a request to urgently begin the mass production of the Rukavishnikov anti-tank rifle. - By the hard look that was thrown in my direction, it was felt how much he was annoyed. "Our fighters are heroically fighting Nazi tanks," Stalin continued, "using bottles of combustible mixture and grenades. They are forced to resort to such means. They have no other melee weapons. And it could be! It could, if our military at one time had a more sensible approach to assessing an anti-tank rifle. Then they underestimated its capabilities and overestimated the armor protection of German tanks. But now we know that the armor of most of them does not exceed forty millimeters. Just right for an anti-tank rifle! Stalin paused, then turned to me: - Comrade Ustinov, tell me if it is possible to start production of the

Rukavishnikov anti-tank rifle, and if possible, how long will it take to establish

production?

- The production of a gun can be started, Comrade Stalin, - I answered. - But now it is undergoing final fine-tuning after testing. At the same time, technical documentation and working drawings are being prepared for mass production at two factories. This will take at least a month.

"Given the importance of the task," Stalin said, "entrust one more, and for reliability, two designers, let them work so that in the shortest possible time we have a good anti-tank gun.

This task was set before the designers V.A. Degtyarev and S.G. Simonov. Created by them in a short time - from the moment they received the assignment to the first test shots, only 22 days passed - the samples of guns successfully passed field tests, which I reported to Stalin in mid-August. He listened with great interest, continually clarifying some questions.

- Simonov's gun, Comrade Stalin, self-loading, five cartridges in the store. -

How does it differ from the Rukavishnikov gun? After all, his anti-tank rifle is also self-loading, chambered

for five rounds? Yes, Comrade Stalin. Armor penetration, ballistic, weight and overall characteristics of both guns are equivalent. But the Simonov gun is simpler, easily disassembled into two parts and in the stowed position has smaller dimensions in length. It has advantages over the Rukavishnikov gun in disassembly and assembly, in detecting and eliminating delays. "Easier is good,"

Stalin remarked. - Easier means more reliable. On the march, can two soldiers carry Simonov's gun? Yes, Comrade

Stalin. - That's good

too. And what are both of these guns in shooting? - About the same number of shots were fired from both - more than a thousand. Simonov's gun had no breakdowns, and Rukavishnikov's gun had two. So there is reason to consider Simonov's gun more tenacious. - Do you see it?

This is the result of simplicity. It is of no small importance in production, especially mass production. Have you considered this aspect of the matter as well?

- Of course, they took it into account, Comrade Stalin. The number of factory parts in the Simonov gun is one third less than in the Rukavishnikov gun. Its production requires 60 percent less machine hours and 30 percent less total time. We consider it expedient to adopt the Simonov anti-tank rifle and start its mass production. - Fine. And what about Degtyarev? - Degtyarev

made a single-shot gun. It is lighter than store-bought, and armor penetration is the same. The gun is very technologically advanced, Comrade Stalin. It can be almost entirely made on lathes. We can organize the mass production of the Degtyarev gun much faster than the store. On August 29, samples of anti-tank rifles were presented by the People's Commissariat

of Armaments together with the People's Commissariat of Defense to the State Defense Committee. Inspection of them by members of the State Defense Committee and the government took place in the Kremlin. Explanations were given by the designers themselves.

On the same day, both samples of anti-tank rifles were put into service. The factories of the People's Commissariat received the task to urgently master and expand their mass production. I would like to say a few words about the talented designers themselves, with whom we met on the eve of the review of their anti-tank rifles in the

Kremlin. Vasily Alekseevich Degtyarev was born into the family of a hereditary Tula gunsmith. His father and grandfather were also gunsmiths. Even before the war, V.A. Degtyarev did a lot to create automatic small arms. A submachine gun, hand, easel, tank, aviation, heavy machine guns were adopted. History did not know another such example, when on equipment

the army at the same time would have so many weapons of one designer. In 1940 V.A. Degtyarev, the second after I.V. Stalin, was awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labor. Four times he was awarded the State Prize of the USSR, including for an anti-tank rifle. It was not only a designer-inventor, but also a master with golden hands.

Sergei Gavrilovich Simonov also made a great contribution to the development of domestic small arms. In addition to the anti-tank rifle, which enjoyed well-deserved military glory on the fronts, the Red Army was armed with a self-loading rifle and a self-loading carbine created by him. He headed a number of design teams of defense plants. In the post-war period, he was awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labor. S.G. Simonov was twice awarded the State Prize of the USSR, including for an anti-tank rifle.

... Mastering the production of a new type of weapon is one of the difficult tasks. It becomes even more difficult if it has to be completed in an extremely short time. That is why we involved several factories simultaneously in solving this problem. Work was more successful at the Kovrov plant, where the Degtyarev anti-tank rifle was designed. To assist the plant with equipment in Kovrov, in accordance with the decree of the State Defense Committee, 150 lathes of various types were delivered from Moscow within one day¹⁷. The plant organized a specialized production. For the general management of preparations for the serial production of an anti-tank rifle, I.A. went to Kovrov. Barsukov. Ivan Antonovich Barsukov, working as the chief mechanic of the Moscow Automobile Plant, and then as deputy people's commissar of armaments, showed himself to be a good organizer. A man of exceptional modesty, he was persistent when the situation required it. He knew the Kovrov plant and production technology well. Intensive work has begun on organizing the production

of anti-tank rifles. "...Neither I nor the director of the plant," Vasily Alekseevich Degtyarev later recalled, "in those days did not know peace. Around the clock, with the exception of a few hours of sleep, we were in the workshops, watching how the production of parts and assembly was going on ... The workers worked with great enthusiasm, many, replacing those who had gone to the front, switched to two or three machines. About two months later,

in October, the plant produced the first batch of anti-tank guns, and in November - more than 5 thousand. Anti-tank rifles were sent directly from the factory to the troops fighting on the outskirts of Moscow. The gunmen liked the guns. Chief of artillery of the Western Front, General I.P. The camera reported, for example, that on November 16 in the area of Petelino, Shiryaevo, 2 enemy tanks were hit by anti-tank rifles, and in the battle for Lugovaya station - 419. In the battles near Kryukov on December 6 and 8, 11 tanks were destroyed.

The Kovrov gunsmiths not only successfully coped with their task, but also helped to establish the production of the same guns at the Izhevsk plant²⁰. I offered to go there to Vladimir Nikolaevich Novikov, who, before being appointed deputy people's commissar, worked as the director of this plant, knew both people and production well. In early November, drawings, technical documentation, and part of the blank parts were delivered to Izhevsk. Several specialists who mastered the production of anti-tank rifles also flew here. Soon, the mass production of Degtyarev anti-tank rifles began here. It was harder to organize

¹⁷ See: Kovrov is 200 years old. Yaroslavl, 1978. S. 16.

¹⁸ Degtyarev V.A. My life. Tula, 1952, p. 114.

¹⁹ See: Shabalin A., Grigoriev V. Called by the Revolution. Yaroslavl, 1977. S. 223.

²⁰ See: Gorbov M. Izhevsk gunsmiths. Izhevsk, 1982, pp. 49-60.

production of the Simonov anti-tank rifle. Along with other enterprises, we entrusted its production to the plant, where before the war we produced spare parts for cars and tractors. More than 300 machine tools were sent here from other arms factories. We completed a technical team from well-trained specialists with the chief technologist of the State Union Design Institute S.L. Ananiev. It was entrusted with the duty to prepare the assistance at the head production of Simonov anti-tank rifles as soon as possible.

At the same time, the production of these guns was also being established at the plant, which was headed by M.A. Ivanov. The production of anti-tank rifles was deployed in wooden buildings specially built for this. They were placed ... on a former potato field. It was literally slashed by vehicles that delivered raw materials, parts and assemblies to the workshops. The workshops themselves were large barracks, along the central axis of which there were three large iron barrels, adapted for stoves. Tin pipes stretched from them to the roof. And all this mercilessly smoked, as it was necessary to heat with wood waste, usually damp and not very combustible. Workplaces at the machines were illuminated by home-made oil lamps, which, of course, did not add fresh air to the premises. And in such conditions, people not only fulfilled, but also exceeded the norms from day to day, from month to month. They worked as they fought, regardless of the difficulties and hardships, not sparing themselves. These people, as well as everyone who bore the Great Patriotic War on their shoulders, deserve the deepest respect and gratitude. Time is relentless. There are fewer and fewer participants in that war. The more

attention, the more carefully, the new generations should treat the blessed memory of those whose lives were scorched by the fire of war, who, in the time of severe trials, showed the best qualities of the Soviet

person.

... And on that potato field, the foundation of capital buildings was soon laid, and after a short time a new plant grew here. Mass production of Simonov anti-tank rifles was established by the end of 1941. They proved themselves well in the fight against enemy tanks and armored vehicles and were successfully used to destroy other targets. Eloquent evidence of their merits can serve as recognition of the enemy. In particular, the technical inspector of the Nazi army was forced to state that the Soviet Simonov anti-tank rifle can be considered the most advanced and effective weapon of all the 13-15 mm anti-tank rifles known at that time.

Simultaneously with the expansion of the production of means for combating enemy tanks, we were fulfilling the task set before us by the State Defense Committee of a sharp increase in the production of small arms. The main model of such a weapon in our army was the Mosin rifle of the 1891 model, modernized in 1930. In the second half of the 30s, the Degtyarev submachine gun (PPD) was adopted, which showed itself well in battles with the White Finns. However, it was designed at a time when cold and hot metal working was at a low level, and forging and pressing equipment did not allow manufacturing high-precision blanks. Large allowances, combined with the complex geometry of parts, required significant machine-hours for the manufacture of PPD. The progress achieved in the late 1930s in mechanical engineering technology, and above all in the accuracy and purity of processing using hot stamping, casting, cold pressing, made it possible to raise the question of creating a new, more efficient design of automatic weapons. This work was entrusted to the plant that produced PPD. In a very short time, G.S. Shpagin developed a new submachine gun design. Georgy Semenovitch Shpagin showed a penchant for invention even in the Civil War, when he served in the regiment as a gunsmith. His talent was revealed in full force at the Kovrov Arms Plant, where he worked under the guidance of Vladimir Grigorievich Fedorov and Vasily

Alekseevich Degtyarev. He participated in the creation of many new weapon systems, including a large-caliber tank and a powerful naval anti-aircraft machine gun. Undoubtedly, the design of the submachine gun he created, which entered the arsenal of domestic weapons under the name PPSH, embodied the knowledge and experience of Shpagin's teachers, our entire school of designers of automatic small arms. V.A. Degtyarev approved of the new automaton, the design of which was based on principles that were fundamentally different from those that he himself adhered to in his many years of design practice. The only thing that was

taken into the PPSH without any changes was the disk magazine from the PPD, which I.V. really liked. Stalin. By the way, later, already in 1942, his commitment to this particular store, which was very difficult to manufacture, almost caused a delay in the supply of the Shpagin submachine gun to the front. The fact is that the complex production of disk magazines began to lag behind the production of PPSH, and there was nothing to equip the weapon with. With great difficulty, it was possible to convince Stalin of the need to organize a much simpler and more technologically convenient production of box magazines (the soldiers called them horns) and to equip them with PPSH along with disk magazines. This made it possible to significantly increase the supply of weapons that were very fond of the fighters.

The device of the Shpagin submachine gun was simple. It was disassembled into only five parts, which ensured its rapid study and development by the fighters. Unpretentious in operation, PPSH was very technologically advanced in production. Only the barrel, especially its channel, needed careful processing, while the rest of the metal parts were stamped from a sheet, and the wooden parts had a configuration that was convenient for manufacturing. All this ensured the manufacture of PPSH with a minimum cost of machine hours and made it possible, from the very first weeks and months of the war, to deploy its mass production at many, including non-specialized factories.

However, at the beginning of the war, a sharp increase in the production of machine guns in a short time was not an easy task. I was convinced of this when I visited the plant, where A.A. Yelyanov, on the third day after the start of the war.

Together with the director, chief engineer M.P. Petrov, party organizer of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks V.E. Polushkin, I walked through the shops, met people, talked to them. Then we consulted on what needs to be done in order to fulfill the task of the government on the production of machine guns, which was the reason for my trip here. "The government sets the task for your plant to double the production of PPSH in July, and six

times in August compared to the June program," I stressed. - I know, your plant is young, there are certain difficulties. Let's consult on how to organize the work, what kind of help you need in order to sharply increase the production of automatic machines in such a short time. "On its own, the plant will not be able to increase output six times in one month," said A.A. Elyanov. - The main thing is that there are not enough machines, tools, qualified specialists. Together we made a generalized calculation of the required forces and means. Then, here, an order was prepared for the

people's commissariat, which provided for the implementation of a number of urgent measures. First of all, it was planned to assist the plant in debugging the technology, organizing production and ensuring the production of submachine guns, for which a team of technologists was sent here under the leadership of

the deputy head of the technical department of the People's Commissariat M.D. Gandlevsky. The brigade included highly qualified two design institutes. In addition, additional equipment was delivered to the plant from five other small arms enterprises within three days. Responsibility for delivery rested with the directors of the shipping plants. Brigades of qualified adjusters were sent to the plant from three enterprises, and students - graduates of the Moscow State Technical University named after N.E. Bauman, which in those years

engineers

technical

department

And

obeyed the drug commissar.

The assistance provided, the great organizational work carried out by the management and the party committee of the plant, the efforts of the entire team made it possible in July not only to fulfill, but also to exceed the plan. For three months, the production of submachine guns was increased by more than nine

times. At the same time, the production of PPSH was also established at other enterprises. One of them was deployed in a workers' settlement, now the city of Vyatskiye Polyany, Kirov Region, where G.S. left in the fall of 1941. Shpagin. On the basis of the bobbin factory, he organized and established the uninterrupted production of automatic machines of his system. At present, the House-Museum of the Hero of Socialist Labor, laureate of the State Prize G.S. is open and operates in Vyatskiye Polyany. Shpagin. The mass production of PPSH was

organized at Moscow enterprises - at a car factory, tool, machine-tool factories, at a sports equipment factory, at the Red Stamping Machine, factories of counting machines, woodworking machines and others. In November, the working people of the capital gave the first 400 machine guns, in December - already 14 thousand, and in the next five months - over 155 thousand. In total, during the war, Moscow gave the front three and a half million PPSH assault rifles.

I happened to be present at the conversation of I.V. Stalin with N.S. Khrushchev, who at that time was the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (b) of Ukraine and at the same time a member of the military council of the Southwestern Front. It was at the beginning of November. Khrushchev asked to send an additional tens of thousands of PPSH assault rifles to the front troops. Stalin replied that the request would be granted as far as possible, but the Ukrainian comrades should not sit and wait for what they would be sent. It is necessary, they say, to adapt some factories to the production of machine guns, as Moscow, Leningrad, and other industrial centers are doing, and the People's Commissariat for Armaments will provide every possible assistance in this.

The additional equipment necessary for the production of PPSH, in particular, special machines for processing barrel bores, were manufactured at the factories of our people's commissariat in such a quantity that made it possible to create a sufficient mobilization stock.

An increasing stream of other types of small arms went from factories to the front: rifles and carbines, light, easel, aviation, tank and heavy machine guns. In the second half of 1941, more than one and a half million rifles and carbines were produced - twice as many as in the first half of the year, the production of machine guns increased eight times and machine guns increased tenfold.

The production of weapons in the eastern regions of the country grew at a particularly high rate. In June 1942, more than three-quarters of all military products were produced here. Along with artillery and small arms, the army received more and more tanks, aircraft, other military equipment and ammunition. The People's Commissariat of Armaments, dealing with

the issues of production, improvement of existing and creation of new types of small arms and artillery weapons and devices, maintained constant contact with the fronts, GAU NPO, weapons departments of the Navy and Air Force. In the first months of the war, this was especially important, since in fierce battles with the enemy, our weapons underwent a comprehensive test. Numerous messages from the fronts to the factories, to the people's commissariat, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, the State Defense Committee testified that it operated, in general, without fail. But there were isolated cases of delays, breakdowns of parts, and other shortcomings. They were also usually reported immediately to higher authorities, up to the chairman of the GKO. In those difficult conditions of the first half of the

war, such reports evoked a sharp reaction, although Stalin himself treated them, as a rule, calmly. Each of them was carefully investigated by specially created commissions, and appropriate measures were taken. For example, shortly after the start of the war, reports began to arrive of cases of breakdowns

feeder springs in SVT-40 self-loading rifles. I.A. Barsukov was

instructed to carefully study the causes and develop proposals to eliminate this malfunction. With a group of specialists, he went to the plant. It turned out that the springs were manufactured in violation of technical requirements and conditions. We demanded that the plant immediately stop the violations, attracted TsKB-14 NKV to assist it, tightened technical control, and appealed to the People's Commissar of Ferrous Metallurgy I.F. Tevosyan about the supply of wire for the manufacture of springs only from the established steel grade. Ivan Fedorovich promised to follow this.

With the help of specialists from the People's Commissariat, the plant made a device that provided the correct shape of the spring. At a high elastic limit of the wire, this presented certain difficulties. For the mass production of springs, a semiautomatic device was urgently designed. The springs are of high quality.

Second example. At the end of June, an alarm telegram from one aviation unit of the Black Sea Fleet arrived at the plant that manufactured Berezin aviation heavy machine guns: "Send a specialist urgently, the BS does not work at all." Around the same time, on the same occasion, a complaint was received to the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks and to the Deputy Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars N.A. Voznesensky. I was given two days to figure it out, take action and report back.

I urgently sent V.N. to the plant. Novikov. Together with the designer and specialists of the plant, they came to the conclusion that the shortcomings were not associated with the production of machine guns, but, apparently, with their installation at the aircraft factory. V.N. Novikov went there and, with the participation of designers Berezin and Petlyakov, deputy people's commissars of the aviation industry and the State Control, carefully checked the installation of machine guns, including in flight conditions. Special technical deviations and violations were not found here either.

An analysis of all the data showed that violations in the operation of machine guns are mainly associated with their improper operation in parts. Apparently, the aircraft armament technicians did not master the machine gun well. I had to urgently send my specialists to the emerging and operating aviation units. The manufacturer was instructed to cancel the previous lubrication with the expectation of long-term storage (in inactivity) and to attach a special memo-instruction for handling and caring for the machine gun to each machine gun. In addition, more stringent control was established over the correct manufacture of parts and assembly of machine guns, over their installation on aircraft.

The measures taken have had their effect. I reported all this to the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks and government. There were no more complaints about the machine gun.

... In early June 1942, more than a thousand workers, engineering and technical workers and employees of the arms industry were awarded orders and medals. I was awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labor. The same title was awarded to B.L. Vannikov, V.N. Novikov and plant directors A.I. Bykhovsky, L.R. Gonor, A.S. Elyan. Among many congratulations, I received a warm greeting from besieged Leningrad, from the Bolshevik plant. It touched me to the core. I immediately replied with a telegram: "Give my warm regards and heartfelt gratitude for the congratulations to the glorious staff of the native plant, who raised and educated me. I promise to devote all my strength to the cause of further equipping my native Red Army with first-class military equipment. I wish you all strength and good health. Your *D. Ustinov*. Having rebuilt the economy on a war footing, the country more and more fully satisfied the needs of the Red Army in weapons. Relying on the growing support of the rear, the front intensified

its blows against the enemy. In the battle near Moscow, his plans for a "blitzkrieg" were finally thwarted. The calculations of the aggressor on the fragility of the Soviet social and state system have failed. By mid-November 1942, the Red Army was fighting fierce defensive battles on the Volga and the North Caucasus, and at the same time was advancing in the region of Rzhev, Velikiye Luki and near Leningrad. She drew strength for the

struggle, the will to win in the selfless

the support of the whole people, in the coordinated work of the powerful military economy of the country, the creation of which by that time was being completed.

The Volga, the river of my childhood, the river with which we, Soviet people, associate our idea of the Motherland, became the frontier where the invasion of enemy hordes was stopped.

From here began their expulsion from our land.

Chapter 2

Fracture

On the stream

The organized and rapid transfer of the Soviet economy to a war footing made it possible for the Central Committee of the Party and the State Defense Committee to begin the extensive rearmament of the Red Army as early as the spring of 1942. At meetings of the Politburo of the Central Committee and the State Defense Committee, issues of equipping the troops with new military equipment and weapons were discussed in detail. Particular importance was attached to these issues in connection with the need for the troops to solve new, offensive missions and to create for this purpose large, mobile formations with great firepower and strike force.

At the end of November 1942, Stalin called me late at night: "Comrade Ustinov, how are things with self-propelled artillery?" - The 76-mm self-propelled guns are being finalized after tests in the army. - And what are the prospects? - So far, nothing consoling.

Serious design changes are needed. - Bad, Comrade Ustinov. Time does not wait. We need self-propelled artillery. Needed urgently. It is an offensive weapon. And if we are serious about attacking, we need to have such weapons. Have enough.

Stalin was silent. Then he ended the conversation:

- I think, Comrade Ustinov, this issue should be discussed at the next meeting of the GKO. Get ready. The meeting

took place on December 2. "We need to organize the production of self-propelled artillery," said Stalin. - We have to hurry with its creation for two reasons. First, our troops need mobile and powerful weapons capable of accompanying tanks and infantry on the offensive and destroying various enemy fortifications. Secondly, it became known that work is underway in Germany on the creation of heavy tanks and self-propelled assault guns. So, we must have a powerful enough weapon against them. Let's listen to comrades Malyshev and Ustinov.

First, Vyacheslav Alexandrovich Malyshev, and then I reported on the state of work on the creation of self-propelled artillery installations. According to our reports, the State Defense Committee made a decision according to which the people's commissariats of armaments and the tank industry were obliged to master the production of new systems of self-propelled artillery mounts (ACS) based on existing samples of tanks and artillery as soon as possible. In the system of the People's Commissariat of Armaments, the task of producing guns for self-propelled guns was assigned to factories headed by A.I. Bykhovsky, L.R. Gonor, A.S. Elyan, B.A. Fratkin and F.K. Chebotarev.

Work on the creation of self-propelled artillery installations did not begin, of course, from scratch. The idea of such a weapon arose and began to be implemented already in the First World War in the form of armored trains. At the same time, it became possible to create self-propelled artillery based on a tank. The first sample of such a system for a 45-mm gun appeared in our country in 1923. It was developed by engineer P.V. Koroteev. It was the world's first self-propelled battalion gun. Later, in 1927, Koroteev created an experimental design

76-mm self-propelled artillery mount. And five years later, a whole series of various self-propelled artillery mounts was put to the test, including a 152-mm self-propelled naval mortar on the chassis of the T-28 tank and a 76-mm anti-aircraft gun on the chassis of the T-28 and T-26 tanks. However, none of the samples made at that time passed field tests and was not accepted for service. The improvement of self-propelled

artillery installations continued in the 30s. In 1942, the first samples of 76-mm self-propelled guns appeared in the troops. But their design, as I already mentioned, needed significant improvement.

After considering the issue of self-propelled artillery installations at a meeting of the GKO in the People's Commissariat of Armaments, an action plan was drawn up, agreed with the People's Commissariat of the Tank Industry. It was envisaged to include in the case both design bureaus and production workers. For the joint integrated work in Sverdlovsk, the Deputy People's Commissar of the Tank Industry Zh.Ya. Kotin - chief designer of heavy tanks KV and IS with a group of designers, representatives of the main artillery and main armored departments of the People's Commissariat of Defense, chief designer of the artillery plant Sergey Petrovich Gurenko. As the owner was the chief designer of the Ural Artillery Plant Fedor Fedorovich Petrov. And the work began. In parallel with the creation of sketches and

drawings of the general layout of the future machine - its body, components, parts - technological processes and the necessary equipment that would be needed during its production were developed. Design, manufacture of parts, assembly of units took place almost simultaneously. People worked selflessly, not leaving the shops for days.

By the beginning of 1943, it was possible not only to develop and test, but also put into production a new self-propelled unit with a 122-mm SU-122 gun. It was created on the basis of the T-34 tank. In January, 25 SU-122s were sent to the front near Leningrad. There, as it turned out later, it was the enemy who was testing the first prototypes of heavy tanks T-VI - "Tigers". In the area of the Mga station, the first meeting of our self-propelled guns with the "Tigers" took place. Georgy Konstantinovich Zhukov later told me that in a short time all the Nazi "supertanks" were hit by Soviet self-propelled guns. Hitler, when he was informed about this, and then presented with material evidence - the Tigers delivered from the Eastern Front with armor pierced through, was furious. He demanded from the designers to strengthen the armor. Its thickness was increased in the frontal part to 85-100 mm. The armament of the Tigers was also strengthened - they began to be equipped with 88 mm caliber guns. Near Leningrad, they managed

to capture one of the new fascist heavy tanks. He was taken to Moscow, where he was carefully studied by the designers. The features of this machine were fully taken into account when creating and improving self-propelled artillery installations. - We intend, - said Joseph Yakovlevich Kotin, - to

equip a heavy self-propelled gun with a 152-mm howitzer that has shown itself well in battles - a gun designed by Petrov. And let's put it on the chassis of a heavy KV tank.

The basis for the design of a new, heavy self-propelled artillery mount SU-152 was the SU-122. But in its design it was necessary to make a lot of additions and changes. Of particular difficulty was the installation of the gun on the chassis. Will it withstand such heavy loads when fired? After all, a 152-mm projectile weighed almost half a centner.

At the suggestion of Zh.Ya. Kotin in the workshop created a wooden model of the installation. This gave the designers the opportunity to see the future system with their own eyes, measure it, calculate and recalculate. Petrov and Gurenko thought about how to simplify the armor of the gun, make it more compact, reliable and easy to install. Tank designers sought to completely eliminate labor-intensive fitting work. The commonwealth

of designers - gunners and tankers gave excellent results.

Together, in a very short time - within two months - the development of a self-propelled unit was completed. In February, it was tested, after minor modifications it was put into service and began to enter the troops. SU-122 and SU-152 took part in the Battle of Kursk and proved to be reliable and powerful weapons.

Work on the creation and improvement of self-propelled artillery installations continued until the end of the war. In addition to those that I have already talked about, the Red Army received self-propelled guns SU-85, SU-100, ISU-122, ISU-152. All of them have proven themselves from the best side.

During the war years, our industry provided the front with about 22,000 self-propelled artillery mounts of various types. The number is impressive. Only

Uralmash produced 2500 self-propelled guns. The path of the last SU-100 was the shortest. On her own, she climbed onto the cast-iron pedestal on the factory square and froze forever on it. In memory of the heroic days of the Great Patriotic War, the following is inscribed on the base of the pedestal:

Shells, tanks, Tons
of steel Uralians
held a sacred oath.

Equipping our troops with a large number of first-class weapons was a complete surprise to the enemy. Hitler's strategists could not imagine that in the most difficult conditions in the Soviet Union new weapons systems would be created and their mass production organized. And the "secret" inaccessible to the understanding of the Nazis consisted in the correct and complete use of the advantages of the socialist economy, which made it possible during the period of military trials to ensure the concentration of efforts on solving defense problems. It was in line with this

concentration of nationwide efforts that specific measures were taken to sharply increase the production of new types of weapons already mastered for production without a significant expansion of production facilities, capacity building and with an acute shortage of skilled labor. What are these activities? First of all, a clear, military-style strict organization of production, an increase to the maximum possible limits of the equipment replacement factor. In addition to this, the high manufacturability of newly created structures is combined with a progressive, well-thought-out organization of production. And all this was multiplied by the enthusiasm of workers, engineers, production organizers.

The widespread introduction of mechanization, conveyerization, the transfer of weapons production to stream yielded tangible results.

Among the first in the country to introduce a production line system was one of our oldest personnel factories, headed by M.A. Ivanov. From the first days of the war, production on it increased sharply. In the second half of 1941 alone, more than half a thousand organizational and technical measures were introduced here, hundreds of rationalization proposals were implemented. Particular attention, of course, was paid to the main production, the most time-consuming and critical parts - the barrel and receiver. In particular, under the guidance of engineer I.A. Samoilov successfully completed the work begun before the war on the creation and development of the technology for extruding the rifling of the barrel with punches - by the mandrel method. The essence of this method is in the processing of the trunk with the help of a device that was called a trellis at the factory. It made it possible to use in semi-automatic mode at once the entire set of cutters used for planing rifling. The time spent on processing one trunk has been reduced from the previous 52 to 1 minute. More than 50-fold increase in labor productivity!

A group of technologists led by S.I. Chechurina developed a technological process for obtaining a blank for one of the body parts of an aircraft gun by hot stamping. As a result, 30 operations were eliminated, and the labor intensity of manufacturing the part decreased by more than three times.

A huge contribution to the improvement of production was made by workers - innovators and inventors. Toolmaker M.A. Kalabin independently developed a machine method for grinding one important part, as a result of which labor productivity increased 30 times. Locksmith I. Kondakov came up with high-speed clamps of the original design and other devices, the introduction of which in only one workshop made it possible to release 40 machines and 100 workers.

Work not with numbers, but with skill - we tried to instill this motto in the minds of both leaders of all ranks and workers. Somehow, at the end of 1941, the forge shop began to slow down production at the plant. At that time I was at the enterprise with a team of specialists and managers. The creation of such brigades during visits to enterprises became a rule in the people's commissariat during the war. The brigades usually included highly qualified, experienced people - deputies of the people's commissar, head of the technical department of the people's commissariat E.A. Satel, other leading experts. This made it possible to develop optimal solutions for any production problems in the shortest possible time. We lived right at the factory. My "office", for example, was then located in a change house, more or less adapted for work and housing, next to the premises where the head of the shop, the technologist, and the head of production were located. In a word, the entire local headquarters was, as they say, always at hand. I held operational meetings every day, at about 4 o'clock in the morning. It was the most

convenient time: it ensured the rhythm of production and allowed, without prejudice to current affairs, to attract managers to them - heads of workshops, shifts, sections, foremen, foremen. At one of the first such meetings, the state of affairs in the forging industry was considered. The head of the workshop I.F. Beloborodov, a capable organizer and leader. In the post-war period, Ivan Fedorovich became the director of the plant, then the general director of the largest production association, twice Hero of Socialist Labor. And then, in the forty-first, it was still a very young man. Reporting, he was terribly worried.

- The forge is poorly equipped, Comrade People's Commissar. Our units are small. No matter how hard we try, we cannot provide the main weapons workshops with blanks in the quantity that they now need. - And what is being done to

rectify the matter? - Constantly we repair, we update knots and details. - Well, what is the effect? - Yes, a small one, Comrade People's

Commissar! It breaks again, fails. And most importantly - single-strand stamping has completely jammed us. - So why are you patching up the forge, as if it were Trishkin's caftan? - But what to do? "We need a new

forge!" - So where can I get it, Comrade People's Commissar? "Can't you do it yourself?" You have beautiful heads and hands. Design new equipment, we will give the task to metallurgists to produce it. Agreed? So we will decide. Designers,

technologists, and other specialists joined the case. A few months later, new forging equipment was not only designed, but also manufactured at a metallurgical plant, and the forging shop switched to multi-strand forging, which contributed to the successful transfer of weapons production to a stream.

Of course, not everything went smoothly, bottlenecks were found every now and then in certain areas. It would seem that all the main workshops reached the set level, but suddenly at the assembly

crashes started. The reason is the short supply of rifle stocks. Upon learning of this, immediately, together with V.N. Novikov and plant director M.A. Ivanov went to the box workshop.

We were met by one of the shop managers N.I. Palladium. His face was pale, almost translucent, his eyes were inflamed. I knew that Palladii had recently arrived here with his mechanical plant, equipment and part of the workers, and in a matter of days set up production, but the amount of production needed by the plant could not be provided.

Maybe.

- What do you see as the reason for not completing the tasks? - In unproductive technology, Comrade People's Commissar. What do you think about how you can increase production? - Of course, we thought and think constantly. We do not leave the shop for days. -

And what is the result? Palladium only spread his hands. So you think it's bad. Do you think the situation is hopeless? No, comrade Palladia! I do not accept such provisions. Yes, they don't exist! Let's take a look at your production.

We walked around the workshop, talked to the workers, and considered the possibilities for a more rational use of the production area and machines. Two hours later again

We entered the head of the department.

"So what are we going to do?" I turned to Palladin. - You say you've tried everything, but you can't increase production? Yes... Flow is needed! It has the only way out. And the flow can be organized! Of course, you need to adapt the machines. But you will surely do this. Your people are simply golden, they are sick of the cause with their souls. Many workers are already suggesting how to modernize the machines. So get down to business for real.

I had to connect to the design of a line of comrades from the "think tank", factory designers and technologists, shop innovators and inventors. But on the other hand, a month later, when the false production at the plant became in-line, the output increased sharply, a significant number of people were released.

A few months later, already in the spring, I returned to the factory and decided to visit the stock shop. I had to get through the yard, through mud that reached almost to the tops of my boots. Workers toiled near the machines stuck near the workshop. In the workshop,

Palladii hurried to meet me and began to report on the state of affairs. - What is it, the "buckthorn king", you don't take measures to organize the delivery of raw materials in a human way? I interrupted his report. At that time, not only at the factory, but also in the city, Palladin was called the "bucket king", since the scraps from the bars used to make stocks were called buckwheaters and were widely used as fuel. - Yes, we just do not do anything to fight the dirt! But this is

the element! - She is an element because you do not control her. Let's figure out how to curb it. It is clear that the chips and scraps that you throw under the wheels of trucks will not help matters. Capital measures are needed, do you agree? - I agree, Comrade People's Commissar, only we have neither the strength nor the means for capital measures. - You ruin more forces and means for daily pulling and pushing cars! And you need to pave the yard. All. Not to drown in the mud. Of course, you will not find asphalt. What if you use a trimmer?

Trimming - these are the ends of the logs that remain after sawing the blanks to the dimensions required for the stock production. We immediately invited several people, took shovels, sledgehammers, trimmers and conducted an experiment. I dug in a few rounds myself. It turned out, I must say, not bad, the trimming stood firmly.

A few days later, Palladii and his workers paved the whole yard, all the entrances to the workshop with cross-cutting. The problem of delivering raw materials to the workshop disappeared by itself, and there is no need to talk about how much cleaner it

became around. By the way, the stock shop worked well all subsequent years of the war, constantly

completed and over-fulfilled tasks. Behind the fate of N.I. I continued to follow Palladin with interest: he seemed to me a highly organized, purposeful, dedicated person. In the postwar period, Nikolai Ivanovich was the chief engineer and director of a large plant, the general director of a production association. He was awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labor. A total of 75 conveyors, conveyors and roller tables were installed at the plant to ensure

continuous production. Two powerful conveyors served the assembly of parts for the 37-mm Nudelman-Suranov NS-37 aircraft gun. The total length of these conveyors was 166 meters. The conveyors were of periodic action. The required rhythm of work was set on them using an automatic control mechanism. At each workplace there were signal devices that took into account the time spent on certain operations.

The transfer of production to a stream made it possible to deliver products according to strictly regulated schedules: daily, two-hour and even one-hour. The production cycle has also been greatly reduced. For example, the time spent on the manufacture of a rifle was reduced by more than a third thanks to the in-line system - instead of 13 man-hours, according to the pre-war norm, only 8 and a half hours were spent. By the end of 1941, the plant staff managed to increase the production of rifles five times, and by the end of 1942 - nine times, which made it possible to equip an entire rifle division with weapons every day. In total, during the war, the plant achieved a 30-fold increase in the production of rifles. Gradually, production at artillery factories also switched to the stream. Among the first was

the plant, which was headed by A.S. Elyan. Faced with the need for a sharp increase in the production of guns, here, in a short time, they reviewed all technological processes, studied and tried to introduce everything new, progressive, which had already passed the test and showed itself well in other industries, primarily in small arms. A significant effect was given by the subject specialization of machine-assembly shops. What does it mean? The manufacture of each of the units of artillery systems became the task of a workshop specially dedicated to this. Let's say, in one workshop the production of the barrel group of the artillery system was concentrated, in the other - the shutter, in the third - lifting and turning mechanisms, and so on. The assembly of the entire artillery system was carried out on the conveyors of the assembly shop. The in-line system required a narrow specialization of the workshops. For example, specialized workshops were created for the manufacture of

each of the parts of the wedge, lifting and turning mechanisms, knurlers and recoilers, shield, carriage ... Each node of the artillery system created a special assembly department, which transferred the finished assembly to the general assembly. In a new way, in strict accordance with the technological process, machine tools and other equipment were placed in the workshops in order to reduce, and even eliminate unproductive time losses. Intershop and intrashop transportations were sharply reduced, vehicles were released. Downtime of machine tools has decreased several times - after all, specialization has saved machine operators from the need for frequent readjustment, they performed one or two permanent operations. It was relatively easy to master such a number of operations, which means that we got the opportunity to speed up the training of workers. Gun on the stream! This was not known to world practice for more than five centuries of the existence of artillery. In-line production increased labor efficiency, made it possible to significantly reduce the consumption of metal, time, fuel, electricity, as well

as to use multi-machine work, thereby increasing labor discipline and production culture, and ultimately achieving an increase in output. As a result of the introduction of conveyor assembly, the cost of tools has significantly decreased.

The specialization of the shops and departments within them, the improvement of the organization of the work of these departments facilitated the planning and management of production. Sharp

the possibilities of monitoring the progress of work and their quality have expanded, accounting has improved. The effect was so striking that the director of the plant A.S. Yelyan even suggested abolishing military acceptance. She allegedly began to slow down the production at the plant. Despite the fact that the People's Commissariat of Armaments and the Main Artillery Directorate of the Red Army objected to such a step, Yelyan nevertheless achieved, through one of the members of the State Defense Committee, the removal of military acceptance from the plant, assuring him that the plant would not only not reduce the quality

of products, but also increase its output, will reduce the cost. However, Yelyan's "experiment" failed. Soon complaints about factory products began to come from the troops, which had not happened before. The director had to hastily hang up and

ask for the restoration of military acceptance at the plant. By the way, military acceptance throughout the war provided the armaments industry with great help: military representatives worked at factories and in design bureaus, most of them were qualified engineers. Excellent specialists and organizers were the military acceptance workers A.N. Anisimov, P.P. Veselikov, A.N. Abramov, G.I. Pulgak, A.E. Kashcheev, A.F. Raketsky, A.D. Evstratiev, M.A. Koloskov and many others.

Military representatives were engaged not only in the acceptance of products. Their special task was to assist manufacturers in the scientific and technical improvement of military products, search for reserves to expand production capacity, improve technology, reduce costs and improve the performance of products. Military representatives had broad powers and rights. They controlled the work of design bureaus and research institutes of the arms industry, constantly assisted the employees of these institutions in practical work, monitored the quality and completeness of the development of new weapons and their compliance with tactical and technical specifications at any stage of development and manufacture. At serial factories, in case of deviation from the approved drawings, violation of the established technology, use of substandard materials or mass defects, they could stop accepting products and thereby stop the production of that

or other product.

The independence of military representatives from the administration of factories ensured high objectivity in their work. And it must be said that the workers of the armaments industry saw their comrades-in-arms in the military representatives, who fought hand in hand with them to achieve a common goal - the supply of high-quality weapons to the front.

So a useful lesson was learned from the "experiment" by everyone. In addition, at the plant A.S. Elyan, as a result of improving the organization of production and management, some intermediate links of the factory management apparatus really became unnecessary, a number of engineering and technical workers were released, which made it possible to strengthen the composition of the masters. And the overall result of all the innovations introduced at the plant was an increase in the production of guns at the plant during 1942 compared to the pre-war level by more than 16 times. The cost of production has decreased by almost half. 13 regiments and 19 tank brigades were equipped with guns produced by the plant in excess of the plan. In June 1942, the great achievements of the plant's staff were marked by the high award of the Motherland - the Order of the Red Banner of Labor.

It was important that best practices be mastered as quickly as possible by all the factories of the people's commissariat. The pace of increasing the production of weapons largely depended on this. That is why, after careful study, systematization and generalization of materials on the plant and a number of other enterprises, we decided to hold a technical conference of the People's Commissariat of Armaments on the introduction of new technology and the preparation of production in wartime conditions. It was attended by representatives of the leading artillery factories, research institutes and laboratories, as well as our People's Commissariat and the Main Artillery Directorate of the Red Army. The conference was held at the plant in early July 1942.

The situation at the front at that time was very difficult. Our troops left Sevastopol after 250 days of heroic defense. The enemy occupied the Crimea and Donbass, created a direct threat to Stalingrad and the North Caucasus. He again managed to seize the strategic initiative. Under these conditions, every new gun, tank, aircraft, every new rifle and machine gun were needed like air. To increase the production of weapons, to increase at all costs—that was the question the Party put.

The materials of the conference and the documents adopted by it determined the main directions for further increasing the production of weapons. Here is a small fragment of the decision of

the conference: "1. All technical work at factories - design, technological and metallurgical - during a radical reconstruction and a significant expansion of production, as well as when new machines are put into production, must be subject to certain technical regulatory tasks. Moreover, this task of establishing technical standards should be linked to certain tasks and the quantitative growth of factories within certain periods. 2. Carrying out further modernization of structures, introduction into production

modernized designs that dramatically reduce time costs.

3. Strengthening work on the creation of normal, standard parts of different systems, produced at this plant.

4. Introduction of malleable cast iron and stamped welded structures.

5. Creation of production lines on the processing of command parts with simultaneous equipment of lines with transport-lifting and vehicles.

6. Pipelining streams and further transition to implementation mass production.

7. Specialization of sections on the basis of typed parts and the widespread use of adjustments. 8. The

development of the machine tool industry, mainly in terms of special machine tools, while using multi-spindle machines and multi-place fixtures. 9. Improvement of

the geometry of the cutting tool, aimed at increasing the processing conditions and increasing tool life. 10. Expansion of tool production

and mastering the manufacture of complex types of tools: broaches, complete cutters, etc.

11. The use of productive types of processing: threaded broaching,

thread rolling and milling, etc."²¹

In these and other areas, already mastered in the course of daily work, we fought for a steady increase in the production and improvement of the quality of weapons. It must be said that we subsequently held conferences like the one I spoke about systematically on various problems and areas of improving the production of weapons. Of course, they played an important role in increasing the production of weapons. And the situation demanded an increase in its supplies.

Only from July 17 to August 5, the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command sent 26 rifle and tank formations, many artillery and mortar units from its reserve to the Stalingrad region. The outcome of the battle on the Volga largely depended on the quantity and quality of weapons. On November 19, the troops of the South-Western and right wing of the Don, and the next day of the Stalingrad front, launched a decisive counteroffensive, which then developed into a general powerful offensive of the Red Army. This meant that all of us - and those who fought to the death in the trenches of Stalingrad, who held back the onslaught of the enemy on a huge front, from the Barents to the Black Sea, and those who selflessly worked in the factory shops and

²¹ TsGANKh. F. 8157. On. 1. L. 11-12.

on the collective farm fields - we all survived.

And not only survived. The Soviet people did much more. By their work at the front and in the rear, they managed to overcome the enemy, who had enormous economic and military power.

Labor is the head of everything. And if in the application to civilian life this seems to be self-evident, then what can be said about wartime? Everyone who went through the war knows well that it is also, first of all, work. The work of a soldier and the work of a marshal, the work of a worker and a grain grower, hard, exhausting work. And if it is illuminated by a great, just purpose, then it is capable of working miracles. Namely, this was the goal for each of us to win the war.

Here, for example, is what was said in one of the reports received by the people's commissariat from the Barrikady plant in August 1942. "A group of workers of workshop No. 4, headed by the head of the workshop, comrade Zamiryakin and the secretary of the party bureau, comrade Martynov, having received a special assignment on August 23, left the workshop only on the evening of August 25, that is, after 50 systems were assembled, fired upon and handed over and repaired one 45mm cannon.

Ordinary document of the last war. Such documents are countless. Behind their stingy and strict lines, history itself rises: after all, these lines reflect the specific deeds of specific people who make up what is defined in the language of politics and science by the term "popular masses." Behind them is labor heroism. There is no other name for the work of those who forged the weapons of Victory. Everyday patriotic deed during the Great Patriotic War was a moral norm for millions of Soviet people.

I wrote about it and saw workers, engineers, designers, scientists, production managers, party workers. A wonderful property of human memory: I saw them as they were during the war. Men and women in their prime, the elderly and the elderly, teenagers, sometimes just boys and girls - they all worked without sparing themselves. Sometimes, death caught them suddenly, like a bullet or a fragment in battle, right at the workplace. Immeasurably severe and cruel winter of 1942/43 in Leningrad. Following the famine, cold came to his houses, to the workshops of factories. Many workers lived at a decent distance from the factories, and in those days such distances became even huge. Transport was the only one - their own legs. It was impossible to stop, take a break, any delay on the way meant death.

The issue of organizing work and leisure for people was extremely acute. In essence, every conversation with the director of the Bolshevik plant, A.I. Zakharyin, secretary of the party committee I.D. Mikhailov, heads of other Leningrad enterprises that produced weapons, ended with a discussion of the next emergency measures to address this issue. The measures were very different, but they were all determined by the principled directive of the Central Committee of the party - to do everything to save people. I will cite how it was preserved in my memory, one of such conversations with A.I. Zakharyin. It took place in mid-December 1942. The director reported on the output of products, then I asked him to tell in more detail about what is being done to improve the living conditions of workers.

- You know, Dmitry Fedorovich, our capabilities, - said Alexander Ivanovich. - Bombing and shelling every day. There are practically no roofs over most of the workshops. But for the rest and overnight stay of workers throughout the plant, the premises are still equipped. - What exactly has been done? - Stoves, trestle beds

have been installed, most of the rooms have tables and chairs. - And how many people can accommodate these rooms at the same time? Do you provide rest for the main shift staff in the shops and at the sites? - Not completely yet. But on the initiative of the party committee, here Ivan Dmitrievich

prompts, we construct temporary buildings. So in two or three days we will provide completely.

- Hurry up. Maybe it makes sense to create for this time a consolidated construction team of volunteers - communists and Komsomol members. Think.

- Let's do it, Dmitry Fedorovich.

- And what about food in places of rest? – Still difficult. But still, everyone can get a plate of yeast soup and relax. And if you consider that no energy is spent on transitions from the factory to the house and back, then this is already a lot.

- Do you feel the results of the measures taken in production? - Undoubtedly!

“Don't be complacent about what's already been done. Think, constantly think about how to alleviate the situation of people.

Of course, the economic and party leaders of the factories did everything to facilitate the working and living conditions of workers and employees, they well understood the importance of this task. But still, the conditions were still extremely difficult. The war continued... Yes, there was a war, a cruel war, not for

life, but for death. But in our hearts, the confidence in victory that did not leave us even in the most difficult days for the Motherland grew stronger and stronger. Perhaps, in every Soviet family, letters from the front and letters that the field mail brought to the front-line soldiers and which they managed to save in the flames of battles are kept as expensive relics. The letters of soldiers and home front workers of the period of the Great Patriotic War are carefully stored in the state archives. You re-read these documents, exciting to the depths of your soul, and it is as if you are touching a pure, bright spring of an unbending folk spirit.

Before me are some of the letters of those years. One of them - to the fighters of the Leningrad Front from gunsmiths from the city on the Neva; it was written in September 1941. “... Fortitude, iron endurance, perseverance,” write the workers, “these are the qualities that manifested themselves with particular force in each of us in these terrible days ... We are not alone, fighting friends and comrades. The whole country, all the people are with us...” And here are the lines from another letter, with which the staff of shop No. 48 of the Bolshevik plant addressed the working people of Moscow. This letter was sent to the capital in October 1941. I emphasize: in October forty-first. The participants in the war remember well what an incredibly difficult time it was. Fascist propaganda excitedly predicted the imminent fall of Moscow and the complete victory of German weapons. And it was then that the Leningrad workers wrote to Muscovites: “Do not step on the Moscow pavements for the fascist wrought-iron boots, do not drink water from the Moscow River for Hitler's cannibals, do not eat Moscow bread for them! All our people will stand up for their native Moscow. A fierce death and a cold grave will be found by the fascist hordes on the Russian plains from Orel

History itself has confirmed the great correctness of these

lines. And one more letter from the Leningrad gunsmiths. It was written more than a year later, on January 19, 1943, the day after the breaking of the blockade of Leningrad. Addressing the soldiers of the Leningrad and Volkhov fronts, the gunsmiths wrote: “In the most difficult days of the blockade, in the days of famine and cold, wherever we are - in cold, gloomy workshops, burning our hands on chilling metal, at the construction of defensive lines ... we never for a moment lost faith in the victory over the hated enemy...” What can bourgeois

falsifiers of history oppose to these and other similar documents of the Great Patriotic War? This is the very truth of life, before which any attempts to prove the "accident" of the defeat of the Nazi invaders, its conditionality by geographical, climatic and other similar "factors" are powerless. In our victory, the immutable law of war, formulated by V.I. Lenin: “The one who wins the war is the one who has more reserves, more sources of strength, more endurance in the masses of the people”²².

Isn't it about such a remarkable endurance that these letters speak? It is impossible not to see, not to feel, not to hear that they are filled with a calm, deep confidence in the rightness.

²² *Lenin V.I. Poly. coll. op. T. 39. S. 237.*

the cause of communism, in its invincibility. And this, in the past, in the present, and in the future, is the main guarantee of our strength - creative strength, transforming the world in the name of a working man, and military strength, which is an insurmountable obstacle for those who seek to conquer world domination.

Thought fights

At the end of December 1942, at a meeting of the GKO, the results of the work of the Soviet economy in the first period of the war were considered. After the report of N.A.

Voznesensky rose Stalin. - We can say that we have overcome the crisis in the state of the national economy of the country, - he said. - Comrade Voznesensky reported that the production of military equipment in the Soviet Union at the present time surpasses the production of weapons by Germany and its satellites in all respects. But the enemy is still strong. Hitler realized that the "blitzkrieg" did not work out for him. And if, after the summer and autumn of 1941, he gave instructions to reduce military production, now he is taking feverish measures to expand it. It is no coincidence that Speer was put in charge of military production, and the relevant bodies of the Wehrmacht were included in the German Ministry of Armaments and War Industry. We are well aware that the fascist leadership is redistributing resources and forcibly mobilizing the population of the occupied countries. Since the spring of this year, a mass deportation of our citizens to Germany from the territories occupied by the Nazis began. The Nazis and the labor of prisoners of war are widely used. All of these are essentially gratuitous sources of human resources. They are exploited like slaves, worse than slaves. Stalin paused, looked at us intently and

unhurriedly. - As a result, the production of weapons in the fascist bloc began to grow. In particular, compared with the forty-first year, about half as many aircraft and tanks have been produced to date, guns of 75 mm caliber and above - by 1.8 times, mortars - more than twice as much. The enemy will certainly try to seize the strategic initiative again. We cannot allow this. Addressing Voznesensky, Stalin continued: "Gosplan must carefully weigh and take into account

all our reserves. In essence, we have already exhausted the possibilities of increasing production through the redistribution of material resources and labor. This means that further growth must be ensured by the internal capabilities of each industry. Leaving the table, Stalin walked around the office, stopped at the map and, glancing at it, continued suddenly in a somewhat subdued, muffled

voice: "It seems that we will fight against Germany one on one for a long time. The allies are in no hurry to open a second front, so you need to rely only on

yourself. Yes, I had to rely only on myself. Of course, deliveries under Lend-Lease and under trade agreements helped us, and the Soviet people never forget this, they felt and still feel sincere gratitude

for their support in the fight against fascism. The economic assistance of the allies in the anti-Hitler coalition amounted to less than 4 percent of the total volume of domestic production and only to an insignificant extent met the huge needs for military products, food, and other materials necessary for waging war. So the attempts of some bourgeois falsifiers of the history of the last war to belittle the significance of our economic victory in it and exorbitantly exalt the role of allied supplies are completely groundless.

The Soviet economy throughout the entire period of confrontation with the enemy in all spheres of its construction and development remained independent of the economy of the capitalist states, free from the influence of international economic,

political and military conjuncture, from the vagaries of the world market. It ensured a stable increase in military production and the satisfaction of all the needs of the front. I will turn again to the battle on the

Volga. Huge masses of troops clashed there. Over two million people, a huge amount of weapons and military equipment, simultaneously participated in fierce battles over a vast territory. The operations carried out by the Soviet troops in the interfluvium of the Volga and the Don were comprehensively prepared and provided not only militarily, but also logistically. And although by the beginning of 1943 the rout of the encircled 330,000-strong group of Nazi troops had not yet been completed, we all felt and knew that it was not far off.

New, 1943, with my comrades included in the People's Commissar's brigade, happened to meet on the

road. We flew to the Urals: it was necessary to study on the spot the possibilities of increasing the output of a group of Ural plants. The Politburo

of the Central Committee of the Party and the State Defense Committee demanded that the strategic initiative seized from the enemy be consolidated and the offensive actions of the Soviet troops strengthened. In 1943, it was planned to carry out the largest operations of the Red Army, which would ensure the completion of a radical turning point in the war. The preliminary calculations prepared by the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command determined the amount of weapons and military equipment required for this. And we had to give them to the troops in a timely manner.

Ural enterprises were the most important part of the country's defense potential. I had to visit them several times. But every time I got to this region, I was seized by some special excitement. The Urals is a truly amazing land, a land of great natural wealth, wonderful craftsmen, a land of the richest revolutionary traditions. The chronicle of the oldest Ural factories is a clear evidence of the mind and

talent of the Russian people. Here weapons for the Russian state have been forged from time immemorial. From here, guns and cannonballs were supplied to Peter I during the war with the Swedes. The Ural gunsmiths provided invaluable assistance to the Russian army during the Patriotic War of 1812.

Not sparing blood and life, the Urals defended the gains of the Great October Socialist Revolution. During the Civil War, they selflessly fought against the White Guards - they smashed the troops of Ataman Dutov, Kolchak. The revolutionary Urals are forever associated with the names of Ya.M. Sverdlov, R.S. Compatriots and other associates and students of the great V.I. Lenin. And during the

Great Patriotic War, the Urals became a powerful arsenal of the country. He received a significant part (over 700) of large industrial enterprises evacuated from the western regions. A powerful economic complex was formed here. In Sverdlovsk, Chelyabinsk, Perm, Magnitogorsk and other cities in the Urals, the most experienced scientific, engineering, technical and working personnel evacuated from Moscow, Leningrad and other places were concentrated. In the Urals, as well as throughout the country, a mass patriotic

movement unfolded. Working selflessly in factories and factories, the Urals helped the front in every way they could - they built tanks and cannons with their personal savings, collected and sent warm clothes and parcels to front-line soldiers, deducted personal savings to strengthen the defense. The Ural warriors showed themselves to be steadfast, faithful sons of the Fatherland in a mortal battle with the Nazi invaders. ... The plane smoothly went down. The sun shone brightly, and before us opened

winter panorama of Sverdlovsk, which spreads widely on both sides of the Iset.

The city lived a busy life, tirelessly forged weapons, built machines, smelted metal. Just these days, Pravda wrote: "The Urals took on its mighty shoulders the main burden of supplying the Armed Forces of our Motherland. And the Urals survived! To their old unfading glory they added a new, immortal one... By their self-sacrificing ones,

with skillful work they supported the heroic defenders of Sevastopol and Stalingrad, Leningrad and Moscow. In Sverdlovsk,

we were warmly welcomed by my old acquaintance, the secretary of the regional party committee Vasily Mikhailovich Andrianov.

"The situation in the region is difficult," he said. - Recently, interruptions in the supply of electricity to factories have become more frequent - there is not enough fuel. Railway transport is working with a huge overload. The shortage of metal, raw materials, clothing, food is increasing ... But we are fulfilling the tasks of the State Defense Committee. We understand it's hard for everyone right now.

I listened to Andrianov and thought: what an incredibly heavy burden the leaders of the regional party organizations carry, especially here, in the Urals. The shift here of the center of gravity in the production of weapons and ammunition determined the extremely intense rhythm of life in the region. In general, during the war, the party committees became truly combat headquarters for directing and organizing the activities of hundreds of state and public organizations, enterprises, state farms and collective farms, for mobilizing people to work and to heroic deeds in the name of victory.

Remembering something, Andrianov perked up, his face lit up from the inside, rejuvenated.

"What have I not seen in a year and a half of the war," he exclaimed, "but I never tire of being surprised by our Soviet man! It seems that all the forces have been exhausted, without a trace. So no! New layers are opening up, and what! Andrianov

found a blank telegram in a pile of papers on the table and handed it to me. "Look, Dmitri Fyodorovich. This is a report from the collective farmers of the region to Comrade Stalin. They collected 50 million rubles for the construction of the Sverdlovsk Collective Farmer aircraft squadron and contributed 33 thousand poods of grain, a lot of potatoes, vegetables and meat to the Red Army fund. And it's not at all from excess ... But how people work both in the shops and in the field! Of course, we have many problems. And with raw materials, and with resources, and with food, and with housing. But where there are no problems, it is in the attitude of people to business. However, you will see for yourself...

From the regional committee we went to the enterprises. The Ural Artillery Plant is the brainchild of the first five-year plan. His work biography is in miniature the history of the industry of the young Land of Soviets. Back in the late 1920s, there was a wasteland in the place where the factory buildings were located. The former machine shop produced its first products in the mid-1930s. These were old, somewhat modernized artillery systems. Many workers of the plant are well known

to me. An important role in the organization of artillery production was played by armed enthusiasts, a prominent figure among whom was Evtkhiy Stepanovich Plyusnin, a communist with pre-revolutionary experience, who during the Civil War commanded a regiment of a partisan army in Siberia. A man of irrepressible energy, he became one of the first holders of the Order of Lenin at the plant.

Among those who laid the first "bricks" of the factory foundation was Viktor Ivanovich Nedosekin. He went through all the steps - from a riveter to a foreman, and then was promoted to party work, where he rose to the secretary of the Sverdlovsk regional committee of the CPSU (b). A significant contribution to the organization of artillery production was made by B.G. Muzrukov, P.G. Kopysov, S.T. Livshits, Stepan Akonov, A.L. Kizima and other comrades.

By the beginning of the war, the plant had a well-coordinated workforce and good labor traditions. For a year and a half, it expanded, underwent some organizational restructuring, and in the winter of 1943 firmly occupied one of the leading places among the artillery enterprises of the People's Commissariat. About two months ago, the

plant was headed by an experienced, although still very young, director Lev Robertovich Gonor. He arrived in the Urals from Stalingrad, where he headed the Barrikady plant. The party organizer of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks at the plant was P.I. Maloletov, in the recent past - the director of the enterprise himself. By nature, this is a born party leader, people have always been drawn to

him. L.R. Gonor briefly reported on the state of affairs at the plant. The director's report was supplemented by the party organizer.

"Now we are just summing up the results of socialist competition," he said. - The output of guns has been increased more than seven times compared to 1940, and labor productivity - almost two and a half times. There are savings in metal, electricity, and fuel. In general, now the people are in a particularly militant mood; makes itself felt Stalingrad! I think the "Stalingrad week" will break all records of labor productivity. "Stalingrad Week" - a week of shock, guards labor was announced then

employees of many enterprises in the country.

G.K. sent a telegram to the Ural plant. Zhukov. He praised tools produced by the plant:

"The plant produces good products. Your guns in the skillful hands of Soviet soldiers beat the enemy well. I sincerely wish you continued success in your work." The telegram was read in the shops. For gunsmiths, this was not just praise. This was an assessment of their work by the most strict and demanding front-line judges. Of course, the Urals were proud of such an assessment. But she, and everyone understood this very well, obliged them to a lot. "Beat the enemy," one of the workers said, addressing the Soviet soldiers, at a rally that took place in those days at the plant. - Beat him, drive him out of his native land. For us, dear front-line soldiers, it will not work. We, as before, will tirelessly forge weapons for you, we will do everything to make them better than the weapons of the enemy!" We have always paid great attention to the reviews of front-line soldiers about the weapons that we produced. This was one of the main criteria in assessing the merits and demerits of certain samples. Moreover, the feedback received from the active army helped us develop the right directions for improving weapons and timely implement the necessary measures to increase their combat effectiveness.

I remember how, at the very beginning of the war, being at a factory led by M.A. Ivanov, I went to the design bureau. The time was late, but none of the designers left the tables, drawing boards and drawing boards. At that time, work was underway on improving the Berezin aircraft machine gun, which had just begun to enter the troops. After listening to the story of my comrades about their deeds and plans, I asked: - And what do the pilots say about your machine gun? You

have here, on the stands, as I saw, he hits well. But how is it there, in the air, how effective is it? The designers hesitated in embarrassment. "We have not yet met with front-line pilots," V.P. finally answered for everyone.

Kamzolov, Deputy Chief Designer.

- How can you say that your machine gun "generally successfully" passed the test? I was surprised. "That's what

the warden told us. It should be noted that the senior military representative at the plant, Colonel N.N. Blinchikov, an excellent connoisseur of weapons, was highly respected by the production workers and his opinion was highly valued. But in this case, this was not enough, it was not just about the momentary qualities of the weapon, but also about the prospects for its development.

"How are you, dear comrades," I reproached the designers, "praising your product like merchants, but how do those for whom it is made evaluate it, you won't be interested?" We need to fix this right away. Go to the front and to the factories where pilots receive planes, take an interest ... The designers met with combat pilots who fought on planes equipped with Berezin machine guns. It turned out that, in general, the front-line soldiers are satisfied with this weapon, but the holes in the downed enemy aircraft remain small.

Thus, the need to increase the caliber of aviation weapons was once again confirmed. Stalin told me about this in mid-July, that is, about two weeks before my meeting with the designers. - It is important, - he noted, - to speed up the production of a trial series of 37-mm aviation

cannons of Shpitalny. Installing a cannon of this caliber on our aircraft will make it possible to more effectively fight for air supremacy.

It was decided to manufacture this batch at the M.A. Ivanov without developing technology and manufacturing tools and fixtures. This gave a gain in time and made it possible to reduce the period to one and a half months. When I

reported this to Stalin, he slammed his hand on the table in displeasure and rose:

"A month and a half is too long. - Stalin looked at the portraits of Suvorov and Kutuzov hanging on the wall and asked: - Do you, Comrade Ustinov, know how Suvorov valued time? "Money is expensive, human life is even more expensive, and time is the most precious thing." So he spoke. I think that's right. In conditions of war, gaining time is of particular, often decisive importance. It is a matter of achieving technical superiority over the enemy. To the creators of weapons, he is not the least. It is necessary, Comrade Ustinov, to think carefully about how we can reduce the time for manufacturing an experimental batch of guns to a minimum. - It is possible,

Comrade Stalin, to manufacture 20 guns in Tula in parallel with the main plant. The Tula plant has experience in the manufacture of aircraft guns. This will buy you time.

Stalin agreed with the proposal, and we immediately launched work.

Vigorously took up B.G. Spiral. Boris Gavrilovich was a prominent designer of aviation weapons. Even in the pre-war years, with the participation of I.A. Komaritsky created an aircraft machine gun, which, in terms of rate of fire, surpassed all previously existing examples of such weapons. Soon, together with S.V. Vladimirov, he designed a large-caliber aircraft machine gun, and after that, a 20-mm cannon. Before the war itself, he was awarded the high title of Hero of Socialist Labor. Prototypes of 37-mm aircraft guns were created ahead of schedule. Installed

on LaGG-3 aircraft, they passed the first military tests at the front.

The test team of the design bureau, which went to the front, reported that seven enemy aircraft were shot down in five battles. In addition, during the last combat mission, the pilots disabled five medium tanks. B.G. Shpitalny immediately passed this information on to I.V. Stalin. At the same time, he concluded that the 37-mm aircraft gun is precisely the weapon that ensures the superiority of our aircraft in firing at air and ground targets. It's just a matter of the number of guns.

Stalin wrote on the memorandum of Shpitalny:

"T. Ustinov. We urgently need to set up the production of 37-mm aircraft guns. Please let me know what you are doing tonight. *I. Stalin*. On the same night, I

reported to Stalin on the timing of the deployment of the serial production of these guns.

A special workshop was created in the newly built building. About 400 powerful vertical milling and boring machines were transferred here from four factories in a short time. The plant, headed by M.A. Ivanov, had to make the rest of the equipment and carry out all other preparatory work on his own. Thanks to the dedication of workers, engineers and technicians, the production of 37-mm aircraft guns with a monthly output of about 300 pieces was mastered in the shortest possible time. However, already in the process of mastering production, significant design flaws were revealed. It was too heavy, which made it difficult to get the aircraft out of a dive. In addition, the gun was, as the production workers say, low-tech and very material-intensive. The casing alone weighed 70 kilograms, and its processing included about 200 operations. And the bolt lock - in the vernacular of the gunsmiths "lock" - was not only a low-tech, but also a very unsafe design.

V.N. Novikov, who was at the plant at the time, reported all this to me.

The extreme importance and seriousness of the problem was such that I immediately flew to the place. During the week I studied the issue comprehensively until I was convinced that the Shpitalny cannon really needed to be discontinued. Reporting this to

Stalin, I proposed to take as a basis the design of Nudelman - Suranov (NS-37) - an air gun, which is much lighter and more promising, to save time, to make prototypes without preliminary development of technology, and after the production of an experimental series, to conduct comparative tests of both designs in troops. Such permission was obtained on the condition that the deadlines for the mass production of guns established earlier were observed.

Returning to the factory, I took up the establishment of a new production. Me and my comrades from the people's commissar's brigade were provided with housing - two small trailers, put in a factory railway dead end. We worked here and, when the opportunity arose, we rested.

As always, I had high hopes not only for designers and technologists, but also for skilled gunsmiths, machine tool builders and tool makers. And there were quite a few such talented people who had truly golden hands at the plant. These are the milling machine Alexander Efimovich Ozerov, the toolmaker Galei Galeevich Gabdrakhmanov, the turner Alexander Vasilyevich Pirotov and other master workers. It was they who were instructed to make parts for assembling the first samples of the new gun. The work was carried out in parallel. What a job it was! Gunsmiths were able to embody the design idea in metal. Along the way, the tools necessary for the production of the gun were worked out, and

technological schemes.

Soon, tests began on the stand of the first sample NS-37. The gun turned out to be reliable, very technologically advanced. Military trials confirmed its advantages over the Shpitalny cannon. As the pilots later wrote to the plant, the NS-37 showed itself remarkably well in battles. In 1942, she was put on stream. The simplicity of its production technology made it possible to increase output by nine times compared to 1941.

I specifically dwelled on the circumstances of the creation and organization of production of the 37-mm aircraft gun in order to show what high demands were placed on the work of designers and production workers. No one was immune from mistakes and failures, especially in such a complex and laborious business as the design of weapons. The main thing was to quickly correct mistakes, draw the right conclusions from failures and go on, go non-stop, giving all the strength of the mind and heart to the creation of weapons and their improvement.

In an era when millions of armies are fighting, as one of the most important conditions for victory in a war, we need, respectively, in mass quantities better machines and weapons than the enemy. That is why throughout the past war, along with fierce battles on land, in the air and at sea, in parallel with the intense struggle of the war economies of the opposing states, there was another, no less important and uncompromising battle - the battle of scientific, design, engineering thought. And in this invisible, but stubborn and difficult battle, Soviet scientists and designers won a convincing victory over the enemy.

The main requirement for a weapon was to ensure its superiority over a similar type of enemy weapon. Not conforming to it, not approaching it, namely superiority in all respects. This requirement was both the starting point and the end point of the work of our weapons designers.

And if its fulfillment was an immutable law then, during the years of the last war, then in modern conditions, when scientific and technological progress has received an unprecedented acceleration, and the militancy of aggressive imperialist circles not only does not decrease, but even intensifies, acquiring more and more sinister forms, just such approach to the creation and improvement of weapons is acquiring ever-increasing importance for ensuring the high combat readiness of our Armed Forces, reliable defense

gains of socialism and peace.

The impartial and stern judge who evaluated the work of the designers was the war. On

February 2, 1943, at about 9 o'clock in the morning, N.N., commander of the artillery of the Red Army, called me. Voronov. He was at that time the representative of the Stavka on the Don Front. "Dmitry

Fyodorovich, congratulations," I heard the excited voice of Nikolai Nikolayevich. - The operation of the front to eliminate the encircled enemy has been successfully completed! Victory, Dmitry Fedorovich, victory! The victory of both our fighters and our weapons. Our weapons have performed admirably! Congratulations! N.N. Voronov knew the

intricacies of the material part of artillery, knew perfectly well the issues of its combat use and the features of operation. We met him in Leningrad back in 1936, at a time when Voronov was the head of the 1st Artillery School, and I was an engineer at the Artillery Naval Research Institute. Nikolai Nikolayevich was a major specialist in his field, who invested a lot of work in the development of domestic artillery, in the theory and practice of its operational and combat use, and just a charming person, an excellent conversationalist. He possessed a sharp analytical mind, able to clearly and expressively formulate thoughts. We discussed many issues with him. And we almost always parted satisfied, even if our opinions differed in some respects and it was not immediately possible to resolve this or that issue.

Message N.N. Voronov about the victorious end of the battle on the Volga, I took with great joy. And soon, in our People's Commissariat, we received detailed information with our armed bias. The fact is that when our troops launched a counteroffensive, my deputy Nikolai Dmitrievich Ageev was sent to the headquarters of the Don Front. He was instructed to immediately, as soon as Stalingrad was cleared of the enemy, to organize work to restore the Barrikady plant. It so happened that during the first interrogation of Paulus, Ageev was behind a thin partition in the hut where this historical event took place. Returning to Moscow, Nikolai Dmitrievich told us in detail about this, about how during the fighting he personally observed the work of our artillery. Front-line gunners made many valuable suggestions for improving some of our samples. In particular, combat practice has confirmed that in order to conduct offensive operations it is important to increase the maneuverability of guns and strengthen their undercarriage. Wishes were also expressed about reducing the weight of some artillery systems. As for muzzle brakes, pneumatic balancing mechanisms, torsion suspension and other innovations in artillery design, they fully justified themselves. From all this, the qualitative superiority of our weapons over the weapons of the enemy was added bit by bit.

N.D. Ageev reported that N.N. Voronov allowed him to take 300 captured trucks for restoration work at the Barrikady plant. It was a tangible support for us. After all, it was necessary to reorganize the production of weapons here. What had been a factory before the start of the battle now consisted of piles of mangled and burnt bricks and metal, collapsed spans and ceilings, walls gaping with huge holes, shattered foundations, crippled machines. And all this had to be turned into operating workshops, conveyors, production lines in the shortest possible time.

lines.

By order of the People's Commissariat, a number of our plants formed and sent teams of specialists to Stalingrad to speed up the restoration of the plant. The general management of the work was carried out by N.D. Ageev. Their pace is evidenced by the fact that the main thoroughfares of the destroyed city had not yet been cleared, and the plant had already begun to produce products, and was once again involved in the general work of producing weapons for the front. The task was completed on time. With the defeat of the Nazi troops near Stalingrad, the Red Army went into

offensive. Our troops launched active operations in the foothills of the Caucasus, on the Upper and Lower Don, near Voronezh, in the regions of Rzhev and Demyansk, near Leningrad. The preparation and conduct of large-scale operations required a steady increase in the supply of weapons to the troops. One of the orders of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief at that time noted: "... the war

against the Nazi invaders requires that the Red Army receive even more guns, tanks, aircraft, machine guns, machine guns, mortars, ammunition, equipment, food. This means that it is necessary that the workers, collective farmers, the entire Soviet intelligentsia work for the front with redoubled energy.

After the defeat at Stalingrad, the enemy took extraordinary measures to compensate for the losses he had suffered in manpower, weapons and equipment. In January 1943, Hitler announced a program to increase the production of weapons under the motto "The best soldier - the best weapon." To surpass the USSR at any cost in equipping the army with military equipment and weapons - Hitler demanded this from scientists and designers of the Third Reich. And we

should have prevented that. In March

1943, the Kremlin hosted a meeting of leaders of the metallurgical, fuel, and a number of defense industries, power plants, railway transport, directors and chief designers of some factories. Conducted a meeting I.V. Stalin. A general review of the military-strategic situation was made by G.K. Zhukov. He noted that our strategic reserves, as a result of the operations carried out during the winter-spring campaign, were running out. The fronts needed to be replenished with personnel, weapons, military equipment, and ammunition. With the receipt of weapons, the Headquarters planned to carry out important measures for the technical re-equipment of the army, create a number of new formations and formations, and increase the striking and firepower of the troops.

"As you can see," Stalin summed up Zhukov's report, "everything now rests on the economy, on the work of our rear. We must finally consolidate the turning point in the war. And for this we need military-technical superiority over the enemy. That is the question. Let's listen to the people's commissars of industry, what they intend to do to solve it. First of all, how will they eliminate bottlenecks.

There were many bottlenecks in each Commissariat. In our country, for example, the shortage of fuel, electricity, and metal made itself felt more and more. When I reported the specific data on the production losses associated with this at the enterprises of the People's Commissariat for

Armaments, Stalin frowned. "Comrade Voznesensky," he said, "do you know about these facts?" "I know, Comrade

Stalin. - And what measures are you taking? - Additional tasks were given to the people's commissariats of ferrous

metallurgy, power plants, and the coal industry. Assistance will be rendered to arms factories in the near future. - Connect to the solution of this problem and you, Comrade Malenkov. - Stalin paused, and then turned to me again: - But you, Comrade Ustinov, do not rely on your uncle, but look for internal

reserves at your enterprises. Of course, we did everything in our power to improve the supply of our factories with metal and electricity. They created their own metallurgical production where it did not exist, strengthened the procurement base, and reconstructed many metallurgical shops. A new technology for the production of steel and shaped castings was introduced everywhere, which made it possible to significantly increase the output of metal.

During the war, our metallurgists managed to solve an important task - to translate

the manufacture of artillery systems from expensive acid steel to basic, much cheaper. The use of a specially developed and improved method of steelmaking made it possible to increase the capacity of metallurgical units, to sharply reduce the consumption of the most important strategic raw materials - nickel, ferromolybdenum, ferrovanadium.

Much attention at armaments factories was paid to improving the production of semi-finished parts in procurement shops, in particular zinc alloy pressure casting, steel mold casting and precision stamping. Mastering the casting of ductile iron with enhanced mechanical properties made it possible to produce parts of complex, hollow shapes, and forging stamping provided small allowances for products. All this gave a significant savings in metal. A constant search for internal reserves to increase the production of

weapons by improving the organization of production, improving technology, and improving the quality of manufactured systems was also carried out in other areas, at all levels - from the design and preparation of technical documentation to the exit of products from the assembly line. An enormous role in the successful solution of the tasks facing the arms industry during the

war years was played by the exceptionally fruitful cooperation of designers and production workers with scientists, including employees of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

"Participation in the defeat of fascism," wrote Academician V.L. Komarov, is the most noble and great task that science has ever faced, and the knowledge, strength and very life of Soviet scientists are devoted to this task.

Scientists often provided invaluable assistance to industry in the course of the research work itself. Often this work was carried out directly at the enterprises. So, academician V.P. Nikitin, together with the workers of the plant, designed and manufactured an electric sight for a 37-mm anti-aircraft gun. The sight worked automatically, which made it possible to reduce the calculation of the gun, to sharply increase the accuracy of shooting. The production of an electric sight was much simpler than the previously produced mechanical one, and this gave a gain in time and labor. Corresponding Member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR N.G. Chetaev solved a complex mathematical problem to determine the optimal steepness of the battle, gun barrels, providing maximum accuracy cutting, non-turning of shells during flight, etc. Academician A.N. Kolmogorov gave a definition of the most advantageous dispersion of artillery shells.

In the improvement of artillery weapons, the results of work in the field of ultrahigh pressures, carried out under the guidance of a professor, later academician L.F. Vereshchagin. We set up a special design bureau, where scientists led by Vereshchagin developed an installation that made it possible to carry out autofrettage, that is, the hardening of mortar and gun barrels. The installation has found wide application in all artillery factories. Thanks to it, the service life and range of guns and mortars increased, and lower quality steels could be used in their production. It should be emphasized that before this world practice did not know a single case of successful implementation of autofrettage. The Institute of Mechanical Engineering was closely associated with the production

of automatic weapons. In particular, held in it under the guidance of Academician E.A. Chudakov's research helped to improve these weapons, increase their survivability, and introduce progressive technological processes into production. Throughout the war, the theoretical guide for improving our automatic small arms was created in 1940 by a team of authors headed by Academician A.A. Blagonravov fundamental two-volume work "The material part of automatic small arms".

The work of scientists from the Academy of Sciences was of the same importance for the improvement of our optical production. Optics were used, in fact, in all types of modern weapons. Our factories widely used new methods of optics coating and new principles of polishing optical glasses, developed by Academician I.V. Grebenshchikov, which contributed to a significant acceleration of the production process. Based on the results of research by the team of the State Optical Institute, conducted under the guidance of Academician S.I. Vavilov, we ensured the production of first-class rangefinders, stereo tubes, lenses for aerial photography, sighting and other optical instruments.

The convergence of theoretical research with the practical problems of industry, and often the transfer of a scientific experiment directly to the production base, contributed to a reduction in the time for introducing scientific discoveries and achievements into production. Thus, scientists from the Institute of Automation and Telemechanics of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, which, after the evacuation, launched its work at one of the cartridge factories, in a short time created 18 automatic devices and machine tools. V.A. Trapeznikov, then a professor, completely automated the process of fast and accurate dosing of gunpowder - one of the main ones at the plant. The introduction of automatic machines made it possible to transfer production to the machine method, completely abandon manual labor and reduce the number of workers employed in auxiliary operations. This made it possible to release about 600 people at this plant alone and achieve savings of 2.5-3 million rubles a year.

The work of this institute helped to improve production technology in the armaments industry as a whole. The report of the director of the institute was heard at the technical council of the people's commissariat. An order was issued on the wide introduction of the results of scientific research into production, and serial production of automatic machine tools was organized. This played a significant role in transferring the production of weapons to

the flow. The convergence of the scientific work of all departments of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR with production was facilitated by the inclusion of many prominent scientists in the technical councils of the people's commissariats. Plans for the introduction of advanced technology into production and the main directions for the development of scientific, technical and design ideas were considered and approved by the Council of Scientific and Technical Expertise. Since

1943, it was headed by Academician A.A. Baikov. The constant increase in the production of weapons for the front dictated the need for an all-round increase in labor productivity and cheaper products. Hence the cardinal scientific and technical task of developing and mastering in mass production such weapon designs that would allow the use of the most advanced, most efficient technology. In view of the inevitable decline in the war conditions of the skill level of the main contingent of workers and a sharp decrease in their number, this technology had to be as simple as possible in terms of both its operational development and the provision of high quality products.

At the same time, the actual development of weapons - the design, manufacture and testing of prototypes up to their launch in a series - had to be compacted in time so that new weapon systems would arrive at the front without the slightest delay. Obviously, without a clear organization of development work, this task could hardly be solved. The war demanded strict management of development work,

concentration of efforts on the most urgent tasks, the solution of which was vital for ensuring successful military operations of the army and navy. With this in mind, the planning of development work on the entire range of types of weapons manufactured by industry was concentrated in the People's Commissariat. The technical department drew up a plan coordinated with interested organizations, which determined specific performers and deadlines for completing tasks, the estimated cost of samples and sources of funding. This allowed

effectively use available forces and means, eliminate duplication of work and ensure effective control over their progress. The technical council of the people's commissariat exercised this control on a daily basis, considered and approved the technical designs of new types of weapons, programs for their factory tests, and gave opinions on their results. Based on the conclusion of the technical council, decisions were made to provide one or another sample for state field tests. It was mandatory that each sample be submitted for testing along with a complete set of documents, spare parts and tools. Generally speaking, field tests have always been a serious test for

us. As a rule, they were attended by developers and other representatives of industry, the main artillery department of the Red Army, responsible employees of the People's Commissariat for Armaments, and major artillery specialists. Field tests usually completed all previous stages of verification, starting with the factory stand and shooting gallery, and were intended to determine the compliance of the weapons with the working design documentation and the specified tactical and technical requirements.

The pinnacle of the test was live firing. According to their results, the fate of this sample was decided: to adopt it or modify it. Shooting was carried out in a wide variety of conditions - in frost and heat, in rain, with a strong dust content of the air, day and night. The material part of the artillery was checked on the march along various roads: a highway, a country road, a gat, along virgin snow. It is no coincidence that one of the representatives of the allied armies, who happened to visit several field tests of our weapons during the war, remarked: if a Russian model of weapons successfully passed all the checks in the rear, then the front is not afraid of him!

A strict and reliable system for the development, production, testing and, if necessary, fine-tuning of prototype weapons contributed to equipping the troops with high-quality artillery equipment. Maybe some of our guns were not as beautiful as other foreign ones (although we strived for a good external finish), but there was no doubt about the high combat qualities of Soviet artillery equipment.

In connection with the increased centralization of development work, the volume of tasks of the corresponding sector of the technical department of the people's commissariat has increased. I instructed N.P. Karasev and E.A. Satel to staff it with highly qualified workers in all specialties and types of weapons manufactured at our factories. The sector was headed throughout the war by the deputy chairman of the technical council, a talented scientist and designer, author of a number of original scientific papers, doctor of technical sciences, professor, military engineer of the 1st rank, then Major General Alexei Aleksandrovich Tolochkov. Under his leadership, the staff of the sector worked smoothly and purposefully and did a lot for the development

of domestic weapons. An important role in improving the organization of development work was played by the creation of the Central Artillery Design Bureau. Before the war, we had artillery design organizations only at factories. They were engaged in mass production and development of prototypes. In general, this justified itself, since the specialization of artillery enterprises and design bureaus according to the types of manufactured systems was ensured. In addition, due to the close connection with production, their rather high efficiency was achieved.

At the same time, such a system of design organizations did not exclude duplication of work and did not ensure the full use of scientific and design potential. The war exacerbated this shortcoming. Under the conditions of an acute shortage of time, scattered and, moreover, insufficiently powerful factory design bureaus were not always able to quickly and fully solve complicated tasks, often did not have the opportunity to generalize, analyze and use experience in the combat use of weapons, monitor the development of enemy military equipment, study and take into account the needs of the army and navy and

to improve the material part on this basis, to create its new samples.

The conditions for design work have also deteriorated. Experimental shops at a number of enterprises were redirected to serial production, and design bureaus were forced to issue orders for the manufacture of parts of experimental structures developed by them to gross production shops. And there such orders were a kind of stepchildren. Their implementation was delayed, and sometimes

frustrated. Finally, the war demanded that a number of factories that had not previously been involved in the manufacture of certain artillery systems be involved in the manufacture of certain artillery systems. For example, the production of 76-mm divisional guns in 1941-1942 became the main task of not one, as before, but five more factories. The production of tank and 45-mm anti-tank guns was also organized. Therefore, it was important that all artillery factories involved in the production of one system work according to the same drawings, the same technology, and use

standard and unified parts. In a word, there was an objective need to create such a design artillery organization in the People's Commissariat that could fill the gaps in the current system of development work. After a detailed study and

coordination of the issue with N.A. Voznesensky, in August 1942, we entered the State Defense Committee with a proposal to create a Central Artillery Design Bureau (TsAKB) under the People's Commissariat for Armaments. Soon the decision to create such a bureau was made. The basis of the TsAKB was the designers of the plant, headed by A.S. Yelyan. In addition, part of the employees of the design departments of a number of other enterprises and from the research institute of the People's Commissariat was transferred to it, and the necessary equipment and materials were allocated. The TsAKB was headed by the Hero of Socialist Labor Vasily

Gavrilovich Grabin, the chief designer of the plant - a major specialist in the design and production of artillery weapons. Under his leadership, anti-tank guns that became famous during the war years were created. V.G. Grabin has a great merit in the development and application of high-speed design of artillery systems, the essence of which is to combine the creation of a new design with the simultaneous development of its production technology and the preparation of the equipment, equipment and tools necessary for this, in other words, in joint, simultaneous work on a system of designers, technologists and production workers. Ilya Ivanovich Ivanov was appointed the first deputy head and chief designer of the TsAKB, and Dmitry Emelyanovich Brill, Pyotr Mikhailovich

Nazarov, Evgeny Georgievich Rudyak, Dmitry Ivanovich Sheffer were appointed assistants to the chief designer. Experienced, talented engineers also headed the design departments.

The design bureau of the Bolshevik plant entered the TsAKB as an independent unit. It dealt with issues of artillery weapons for the Navy and coastal defense. At the beginning of the war, by decision of the government, this design bureau was evacuated to the Stalingrad plant "Barrikada". There they wanted to disband it, but we could not agree with such a short-sighted step. Leningraders remained an independent design organization - KB-2. This bureau reported directly to the director of the plant. When the Nazis came close to Stalingrad and there was a threat of capturing the city, the State Defense Committee decided to evacuate KB-2 to Siberia. Now, when the Central Artillery Design Bureau was created, KB-2 became part of it. In 1944, KB-2 returned to Leningrad and continued to work as a branch of the TsAKB. The main task of the Central Artillery Design Bureau was the design, manufacture and comprehensive testing of new

and improvement of existing models of all types of artillery weapons. It was entrusted with the development of working drawings, specifications and other technical documentation, and

as well as standards and normals for units and parts of artillery systems in order to organize, in the shortest possible time, the gross production of guns adopted for service. It also provided direct technical assistance to factories in setting up such production. All tasks and work plans of the bureau were approved by the people's commissar. In the prescribed manner, through the technical council of the people's commissariat, the projects and samples of artillery weapons developed in the bureau were

presented to me. The TsAKB was located on the territory of a branch of an artillery plant, where B.A. was the director. Fratkin. With the help of the People's Commissariat of Defense, an artillery range was created near the plant, where new types of weapons were tested and tested. Representatives of the bureau maintained constant and close contact with the fronts, which made it possible to quickly take into account their requirements when designing and improving artillery

systems. Development work in the field of mortar weapons was organized in a new way. Until 1942, the People's Commissariat did not have a design bureau for this type of weapon. The work was carried out in one of the research institutes and in the design bureaus of factories that manufactured mortars, and were aimed mainly at ensuring their mass production. But a sharp increase in the production of mortars with the outbreak of war, the need for constant improvement of their design, as well as the development of new types of mortar weapons required the creation of a special, well-equipped experimental design organization.

By the decision of the State Defense Committee of April 11, 1942, such an organization - the Special Design Bureau of Smoothbore Artillery (SKB) - was created. The basis of the SLE was made up of personnel from a research institute and a mortar group of designers from one of the factories. Boris Ivanovich Shavyrin, an outstanding designer of mortar armaments, later Hero of Socialist Labor, laureate of Lenin and State Prizes, headed the SKV. Under his leadership and with direct participation, 50-mm company, 82-mm battalion, 107-mm mountain pack and 120-mm regimental mortars were developed and put into service, which proved to be excellent on the fronts of the Great Patriotic War. A special design bureau was located on the area of the evacuated plant, which was headed by Ya.A. Shifrin.

Pilot production was created here, and at one of the test sites - a department to ensure testing of new types of mortars developed by SKB. Through the efforts of the bureau, 82, 107 and 120-mm mortars were modernized in a short time, work was completed on the creation of a 160-mm mortar - the most powerful during the Second World War, and a number of other types of weapons. During the war years, the system of aircraft weapons design organizations did not undergo a radical change. The Central

Artillery Design Bureau was also involved in the development of new models of aviation weapons. In addition, in the system of the People's Commissariat in 1944, a research institute was created, which was engaged in the scientific and theoretical justification for the design of small arms and cannons for aviation. He also carried out independent design and manufacture of new models of weapons and ammunition.

The need to solve design problems using the latest achievements of science and technology in the shortest possible time forced to entrust the design of some weapon systems to several design organizations that worked on a competitive basis. This, as a rule, accelerated the process of creating new types of weapons and made it possible to offer the highest quality ones for adoption. Generally speaking, already in the first period of the war, significant experience in high-speed design was accumulated. It was necessary to comprehend, generalize this experience, and at the same time try to look at least into the near future, into tomorrow. To this end, in April 1943, we held an expanded plenum of the technical council of the People's Commissariat for Armaments.

For the first time during the war, our best scientific, design forces, representatives of production and customers - the Main Artillery and Main Armored Directorates of the Red Army - came together to discuss urgent problems in the field of creating new weapons and outline ways to solve them. Marshal of Artillery N.N. Voronov, as well as other generals and officers - representatives of the fronts spoke about the experience of the combat use of weapons. The 37-mm and 85-mm anti-aircraft guns, in particular, were highly appreciated. Front-line soldiers made claims to anti-tank artillery. The 45-mm gun, in their opinion, due to its low power, could not carry out a sufficiently effective fight against enemy medium tanks. Among the field artillery guns, the 76-mm divisional gun, 122-mm and 152-mm howitzers were recognized as the best. The 76-mm regimental gun of the 1927 model was proposed to be modernized, made lighter and more maneuverable. This was also required by the changed - now predominantly offensive nature of the actions of our troops. We heard a word of praise about anti-tank rifles, as well as 82-mm and 120-mm mortars. But the 50-mm company mortar caused criticism because of the short range and low power of the mine. In addition, servicing the mortar during loading unmasked the calculation.

After the plenary session, at which E.A. Satele, work has begun in sections. Almost two years of combat experience made it possible to analyze in detail how artillery and small arms weapons and fire control devices operate in difficult climatic conditions, with high dust content in the air, high humidity, at extremely low temperatures and its sharp changes. Practice has also provided rich material on the operation of various weapon systems with an increased load in conditions of increasing tension in hostilities and an increase in the intensity of fire. All this made it possible to develop requirements for the development of weapons across the entire spectrum of their tactical, technical and operational characteristics. Particular attention was paid, in particular, to the issue of creating more powerful than those in service, but at the same time sufficiently mobile field artillery guns.

Some time later, this issue was brought up by us and considered at a meeting of the GKO. The State Defense Committee decided to create a lightweight 152-mm howitzer and start its mass production. The term for the production of prototypes was set to be unprecedentedly tight - a little more than two weeks.

The GKO meeting ended late at night on April 12. Returning from the Kremlin to the people's commissariat, I immediately called the chief designer of the plant Fedor Fedorovich Petrov in the Urals. Even there, at a meeting of the GKO, I decided that the task assigned to us was only within the power of the design bureau of F.F. Petrov, the most powerful of the factory artillery design teams. In addition, it was it that had the richest experience in designing heavy artillery systems. Petrov, despite the late, and by Ural standards even the

predawn hour,

was in place.

Hello, Fyodor Fyodorovich. - Hello,
comrade Commissar. - The State
Defense Committee set a new task for us - to give the army
lightweight 152mm howitzer. -

What are the deadlines? -

The deadlines are such that by the first of May we must submit five prototypes for state testing.

"But we don't even have working drawings! exclaimed Petrov. "Still,
we have to meet the deadline. The decision has been made, and you yourself perfectly
understand what this means. We will work together. All possible assistance will be provided to you.
I'm waiting for your proposals in two days. I have studied

F.F.'s style of work well. Petrov and knew that he would immediately assemble his "combat
crew" - designers A.N. Bulasheva, N.G. Kostrulina, D.A. Ryzhenko, P.A. Komissarov, V.D. Semenov,
V.N. Sidorenko. They will conjure incessantly over

drawings until acceptable contours of the future design are developed. They had to resolve the age-old contradiction between the power of the gun and its mobility, maneuverability.

It should be said that the distinctive features of the designs developed under the guidance of F.F. Petrov, were just a much lower metal consumption in comparison with similar foreign samples, high manufacturability, unification of many parts and even entire assemblies. In wartime, all this was of great importance. A promising design technique was well mastered in Petrov's design bureau - the

imposition of a larger caliber gun barrel on a smaller caliber gun carriage. Petrov followed this path this time as well. Two days later he called me:

- Comrade People's Commissar, our proposal is as follows - we are thinking of taking the gun carriage and sight from the 122-mm M-30 howitzer of the 1938 model. We put the barrel of a 152-mm M-10 howitzer of the 1938 model on it. We use the shutter from the same howitzer.

We considered a similar option as one of the possible ones in our technical council. Therefore, I immediately asked Petrov the main

question: - And how do you unload the carriage from excess recoil energy? After all, you need to pay by about one third. "That's

exactly what we're scratching our heads over right now. We agree on one thing - it is necessary to equip the

howitzer with a muzzle brake. - Have you tried to calculate what fraction of the recoil energy it can perceive? "Now we're doing this sort of thing. On the recoil device we reset for no about 30 percent return.

The fact that the designers already had a certain theoretical study of the project was encouraging. But still I asked:

- How are you, Fyodor Fyodorovich?

- Of course, there are doubts. But now there is confidence that the task will be completed in term.

To be honest, I had my doubts too. Will the designers, technologists, pilot production workers be able to meet the deadline? I knew well what it meant to design an artillery system, to calibrate and calculate it to the last screw, to embody it in metal. But at the same time, I firmly believed in the talent and experience of Petrov and his staff. Fedor Fedorovich Petrov, later Hero of Socialist Labor, laureate of the Lenin and State Prizes of the USSR, was undoubtedly an outstanding designer of artillery weapons.

It was F.F. Petrov together with designers S.P. Dernov, P.G. Kostrulin, A.P. Bulashev, A.A. Ilyin, P.A. Chernykh, A.Ya. Drozdov created in 1938 the divisional 122-mm howitzer M-30. The same howitzer, about which front-line artillerymen said that it was not better and could not be. This is probably an exaggeration, but for warriors who are in love with a reliable, reliable and powerful weapon, I think it is forgivable. In addition, this howitzer is indeed recognized as a classic not only by our specialists, but also by enemy specialists. And others who left the led by F.F. Petrov of the design bureau of the guns have proven themselves on all fronts of the Great Patriotic War. In total, a total of 13 artillery systems developed by him were put into service.

Somehow, after the war, I visited the Military History Museum of Artillery, Engineer and Signal Corps in Leningrad. One of the exhibits caught my attention - the M-30 howitzer, truly a hero howitzer. She fought 11,750 kilometers, fired 6,729 shells at the enemy, and destroyed a lot of his manpower and equipment. But this howitzer -

one of the many thousands created in our factories...

The creation of a new howitzer, which was given the name D-1, progressed successfully. A few days before May 1, the Urals began to collect prototypes. For this

the best forces were thrown to work.

In the early morning of April 30, the long-distance telephone rang in my office.

"Comrade Commissar," I heard the voice of F.F. Petrov. It sounded like joy. - Allow me to congratulate you on the holiday. Five D-1 howitzers have just been shipped. The head of the road swore - he would give the green light to the

echelon! - Thank you, Fedor Fedorovich, for the congratulations and good news. accept mine too congratulations on the holiday and success.

It was really good news. I immediately called Stalin. He listened to my report on the shipment of prototypes of the new howitzer to the test site and said in an unusually warm voice: - That's good, Comrade Ustinov. This

is military. Now we can hope that the howitzer we really need will appear in the troops on time. Pass on, Comrade Ustinov, many thanks to everyone who worked on fulfilling the task of the State Defense Committee. And do not pull with field tests. We need new howitzers as soon as possible. I did not know then why Stalin was in such a hurry. But in

connection with the events that began at the front two months later, I remembered this conversation, and it became clear to me that Stalin had in mind the Battle of Kursk.

Field tests of the D-1 howitzer were successful. On May 17, it was accepted by the state commission. If there was a

registration of high-speed design records, then the creation of the 152-mm howitzer D-1 would undoubtedly take the most prominent place among them. The 76-mm gun, which was put into service in 1939, took 18 months to build, and by pre-war standards, this was considered a very short time.

Compare: 18 months - and 18

days! It was another victory for Soviet design thought. In almost all combat characteristics, the D-1 was superior to the 150-mm howitzer, which at that time was in service with the Nazi army.

With increasing tension, design work was carried out in the field of anti-tank artillery. During the first period of the war, the Red Army had only one special anti-tank gun of 45 mm caliber. And she carried out those tasks that were solved by our units and units during the hostilities. But the advent of medium tanks with shielded armor, especially tanks of the T-VT "Tiger" type, and self-propelled guns with enhanced armor protection required a qualitatively new anti-tank artillery. I have already talked about powerful self-propelled guns capable of destroying any enemy armored vehicles created by Soviet

designers. But an anti-tank gun was needed to conduct effective anti-tank combat by rifle units.

On April 15, 1943, the State Defense Committee adopted a resolution "On measures to strengthen anti-tank defense." In it, in particular, our people's commissariat was charged with the duty to master the production of improved anti-tank and tank guns. Now it was possible and necessary to return to the 57 mm ZIS-2 anti-tank gun.

Two months later, on June 15, by decision of the GKO, an improved 57-mm ZIS-2 anti-tank gun was adopted, and three weeks later, just in time for the beginning of the Battle of Kursk, it began to enter the troops. In terms of its combat qualities, the ZIS-2 significantly surpassed all similar models of anti-tank guns of foreign armies available at that time. It was 2.2 times more powerful than the 50 mm German cannon, 5.4 times the 37 mm American, and 1.6 times the 57 mm English. In the autumn of 1943, during a government

reception in the Kremlin, a head of the British military mission in the Soviet Union, Lieutenant General Martel:

- Mr. Ustinov, I have heard a lot about the high combat qualities of your new 57-mm anti-tank gun. Would you be so kind as to support the request of my

government to provide us with several of these guns for review in our army? "I think it is

possible," I replied, "because we are allies. Soon the Soviet

government granted this request of the British government. It should be noted that anti-tank weapons

were improved not only through the creation of more powerful guns, but also through the development of more and more effective projectiles. In 1943, sub-caliber and cumulative shells of 45, 57, 76, 85 and 122 mm calibers were created and put into service. This greatly enhanced the capabilities of our artillery to fight enemy tanks. In the same year, 1943, the 76-mm regimental gun, the first-born of Soviet artillery production, was

also modernized. Increasing the maneuverability of combat operations of troops, the need to accompany the infantry not only with fire, but also with wheels, as artillerymen say, on the battlefield required the modernization of the gun and, above all, reducing its weight. By 1943 it had reached almost a ton.

Prototypes of the new gun were manufactured by a plant headed by A.I. Bykhovsky. It successfully passed field tests, and then military tests, and was put into service in September 1943. The gun was almost twice as light as the previous one, successfully combined high ballistic qualities and maneuverability, and was much more technologically advanced than its predecessor in production. As for the regimental guns of the enemy, there were two types of them in the fascist German army: a light 75-mm infantry gun of the "18" model and a heavy 150-mm infantry gun of the "33" model. However, due to their low combat qualities, both of these systems were discontinued, and a replacement for them was never found.

In the Soviet divisional artillery already in 1942, the old 76-mm USV cannon was replaced by a new system of the same caliber - ZIS-Z. Compared to the previous gun, it had a weight of more than 300 kilograms less, was characterized by excellent ballistics and a high rate of fire. And since the enemy did not have anything like this in the divisional link of his artillery, this immediately gave us advantages, especially in anti-tank defense. The same situation was achieved in other types of weapons.

So, in terms of rate of fire, accuracy and reliability, our 23-mm and 37-mm aircraft guns surpassed the corresponding enemy models. This contributed to the conquest of Soviet aviation air supremacy. And in mortar armament, our designers have gone far ahead. This applies primarily to the 120-mm regimental mortar B.I. Shavyrin and 160-mm mortar I.G. Teverovsky. All this is so. But it would be wrong to think that in the field of designing and improving weapons, everything went, as they say,

without a hitch. No, we also had difficulties, sometimes considerable ones.

By the beginning of the war, we had created and had good tank artillery capable of successfully fulfilling all fire missions. But in the course of the battles, a number of shortcomings were revealed, over the elimination of which they had to rack their brains. The 76-mm tank gun, which was the main armament of the tanks, caused especially a lot of trouble. Moreover, the troops had no complaints about the cannon itself. She was reliable and reliable. But it was installed in the tank turret not by gunners, but by the designers of the tank factory, and, admittedly, it was installed unsuccessfully. It was extremely inconvenient for the gunner to work on the lifting and turning mechanisms. The telescopic sight was not installed in the best way. The loader experienced great inconvenience. As a result, the combat rate of fire of the gun was five times lower than technically possible. The accuracy of shooting left much to be desired. A serious disadvantage was the fact that the total weight of the swinging part of the gun was twice the weight of the recoil parts. On tanks

KV, T-34, 76-mm guns L-11 and F-32 of the 1933 model were installed and

F-34 model 1940. The F-34 was the first long-barreled gun in world tank building. In the USA and England, they appeared only in 1944 on the Sherman and Comet tanks. As for the fascist German army, by the time of the attack on the Soviet Union, it was armed with a single-caliber gun - 37 mm, which was replaced by a 50-mm cannon during 1942. But this system did not justify itself. At first, its trunk was almost doubled. However, this did not give much effect, and therefore they began to install a 75-mm cannon on the tanks. And finally, an 88-mm anti-aircraft gun was already installed on the T-VI tank, but this novelty of the Nazis was clearly underdeveloped.

In a word, in matters of tank weapons, we were, as they say, "preemptively." Based on the experience accumulated in the prewar period, new technical and design problems that arose during the war were also successfully solved. By the joint efforts of the designers - artillery and tank - all issues related to the installation of a 76-mm gun in the tank were successfully resolved. And when in the design bureau of F.F. Petrov created a short cylindrical cradle for 85, 100 and 122-mm self-propelled guns instead of bulky box-shaped cradles, we got the opportunity to mount guns of such calibers on tanks. This further strengthened the advantages of Soviet combat vehicles over enemy tanks, which did not have and could not create anything capable of withstanding our T-34, KV and IS. A lot of work was done by the designers of small arms. In June 1943, a 7.62-mm heavy

machine gun, created by designer Pyotr Maksimovich Goryunov, was adopted by our troops. He immediately fell in love with our fighters, as he was simple in design, reliable, quickly transferred to a position for firing at air targets. Then, in 1943, the A.I. submachine gun began to enter the troops. Sudayev, which, along with the PPSH, is rightfully considered one of the best examples of small arms during the Second World War. The saturation of the troops with first-class small arms and other types of weapons increased the combat offensive power of our army. This power was clearly manifested in the new, decisive battles of the Great Patriotic War.

The collapse of the Citadel

The heavy defeat that fascist Germany suffered in the winter of 1942/43 on the Soviet-German front shook it to its foundations. But she still had great military potential. The fascist leadership carried out a total mobilization of human and material resources both at home and in the occupied countries, hoping to ensure active offensive operations against the Red Army and seize the strategic initiative again. By the summer of 1943, Nazi Germany managed to concentrate

on the Soviet-German front over 5.3 million people, more than 54 thousand guns and mortars, about 6 thousand tanks and assault guns, and 3 thousand aircraft. The fascist German command was able to concentrate such enormous

forces and resources precisely here, in the east, largely due to the fact that the governments of Britain and the United States violated their allied obligations to the USSR and refused to open a second front in Europe in 1943. "This is your decision," wrote I.V. Stalin to American President F. Roosevelt - creates exceptional

difficulties for the Soviet Union, which has been waging war with the main forces of Germany and its satellites for two years with the utmost exertion of all its forces, and leaves the Soviet army fighting not only for its country, but also for its own allies, their own forces, almost in single combat with a still very strong and dangerous enemy.

Needless to say, what a heavy and negative impression in the Soviet Union - among the people and in the army - this new postponement of the second front and the abandonment of our army, which has brought so many victims, will make without the expected serious support.

from the Anglo-American armies.

Yes, the Soviet Union still fought fascism virtually one on one. And in order to defeat him, it was necessary to give the fight all the forces. The order of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief dated February 23, 1943 aimed soldiers and home front workers at this. "The fascist German army is going through a crisis due to the blows received from the Red Army, but this does not mean that it cannot recover. The fight against the German invaders is not over yet - it is only unfolding and flaring up ... This struggle will require time, sacrifices, the exertion of our forces and the mobilization of all our capabilities. The Central Committee of the Party and the GKO foresaw the

possibility of attempts by fascist Germany to take revenge for the winter defeats and wrest the strategic initiative from the Soviet Union at any cost. Both the army and the rear of the country were preparing to thwart these attempts.

Urgent and decisive measures were taken to strengthen the fuel and energy base of metallurgy and transport, to eliminate the disproportions in the country's military economy that had emerged by the end of 1942. First of all, it was necessary to improve the work of the main coal regions of the East - Kuzbass and Karaganda, on which, after the loss of Donbass, the main burden of providing the military economy with fuel fell. The Central Committee strengthened the leading Party bodies in these areas, additionally approved its representatives at many large mines - Party organizers and released secretaries of the Party bureau. Compared with 1942, capital investments in the coal industry almost doubled, and coal engineering was restored. Vigorous measures were also taken to increase the production of liquid fuels, increase the generation of electricity, and improve the operation of transport.

By the beginning of 1943, the problem of providing the military industry with metal became very acute. In February, the State Defense Committee adopted a special resolution "On emergency assistance measures for ferrous metallurgy", which emphasized the need to provide metallurgical enterprises with fuel, raw materials, and electricity as a matter of priority. The metallurgical

base of the arms industry also made a great contribution to solving the problem of metal. In the first year of the war, it included 35 open-hearth furnaces with a total capacity of 1,400 tons and 21 rolling mills. Over 40 percent of the open-hearth furnaces and more than four-fifths of the rolling capacity were located at armaments factories in the deep rear. In the first period of the war, the arms industry lost up to 45 percent of the capacity of open-hearth furnaces and 17 percent of rolling mills. During the entire war, we put into operation only two new open-hearth furnaces with a total capacity of 100 tons. Somewhat better, but still insufficiently compensated for the loss of rolling capacity; in the Trans-Volga region, we included four new camps in artillery production. Three of them used to carry out shipbuilding orders, and one was just under construction. But, despite the losses and

difficulties, practically without an increase in open-hearth and rolling capacities, our special metallurgy ensured a continuous increase in the production of weapons. Through the efforts of designers and technologists, innovators and inventors, a significant increase in the productivity of metallurgical units and equipment was achieved: metal removal from a square meter of the hearth of smelting furnaces was increased, coefficients were improved, downtime and repair periods were reduced. At the plant headed by I.A. Ostroushko,

already in 1942, at the initiative of the best steelmakers, high-speed melting was introduced into practice. Speed methods were applied

²⁵ Correspondence of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR with US Presidents and Prime Ministers Great Britain during the Great Patriotic War 1941–1945 M., 1976. T. 2. S. 70.

²⁶ *Stalin I. V.* About the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union. S. 94.

and before the war. But now they are not the exception, but the rule. Here is what N. Melnikov, a high-speed steelmaker of the electric open-hearth shop of the plant, wrote about this in a local newspaper

in May 1942: "In the past, I also had high-speed melting, but, unfortunately, they were not a system of work. I achieved new successes in the pre-May competition. Then I managed to reduce the time for smelting steel to 7 hours 55 minutes instead of 9 hours. But I

wanted to do more. Soon the heat was given for 7 hours 35 minutes, and then for 7 hours 5 minutes. Now that our plant has joined the All-Union socialist competition, we, high-speed steelworkers, have begun to work even more productively. In May, I undertook to give 10 high-speed heats with high quality steel. For 20 days in May, I managed to

cover my obligation. 15 high-speed heats - this is my first contribution to the cause of strengthening assistance to the front. Equally significant

was the contribution of the teams of steelmakers M.M. Gorbunova, A.G. Lykov. At the new open-hearth furnace, steelmakers Alexander Ulyanov and Gennady Ilyin reduced the duration of melting by 1.5–2 hours and began to produce daily 5–7 tons of over-plan metal. Giving above-plan metal, the steelworkers

felt like fighters in the forefront. Busily and simply they did the work that required genuine courage and heroism. In January 1943, an emergency situation developed in the electric open-hearth shop: the first

furnace had just produced a melt, and high-speed melting on the second was coming to an end. At this moment, to the shift supervisor A.F. Alexander Borisov ran up to Karmishkin.

- You can't let the ladle melt! he reported. - Why?

What's happened? - The

bottom! Repair is needed!

- We'll tear off the heat, Sasha! No spare bucket! The metal will disappear... - And if you try to repair it?

But the ladle is hot! - So,

we'll work hard ... There was no

way out, and the shift supervisor gave permission for repairs. To cool the ladle, hoses of compressed air and water were quickly brought up. The red-hot refractory brick slowly darkened. But there was no time left, and Alexander Borisov, dressed in felt boots, cloth overalls, a felt hat, mittens, goggles, went down the stairs into the ladle. Even a man of such a heroic build as Borisov could withstand the brutal heat of the ladle only for a matter of seconds. Here he is, all smoking, appeared over the edge of the ladle. A jet of compressed air and water was immediately directed at him. And again - into the ladle, and again frequent blows came from its red-hot depth ... Finally, the outlet was cleaned, the stopper was installed and secured.

- Done, - croaked Borisov, literally falling into the hands of his comrades. They pulled him off overalls that had already begun to smolder and were taken to a cool place.

The bridge crane picked up the ladle and brought it to the chute of the open-hearth furnace. A few minutes later, sparkling metal gushed out of the outlet ... This is an

ordinary fact, many of which can be found in the biography of any workshop, any plant that worked for the front, for victory during the war. But because he is a private, this and other similar facts do not become less significant. On the contrary, this is precisely why they show with particularly impressive force the greatness of spirit, selflessness and devotion of a simple Soviet worker, of whom we have many millions ...

I consider it my duty to at least briefly tell here about one more of them - Ivan Ivanovich Razumov. I remembered him in connection with the story about the bucket Alexander Borisov. So, the master of the boiler house at the factory CHP Razumov more than a hundred times - I want to emphasize this again - more than a hundred times during the war descended into a red-hot boiler to eliminate accidents.

Once I happened to be present at such an operation. It happened in the winter of 1943/44. It must be said that the energy facilities of the plant, which worked with a large overvoltage, by that time began to stumble every now and then. This serious problem concerned not one plant, but the whole group, even the entire industry, and to study and solve it, I flew to the Urals. Just the next day after our arrival, the director of the plant, S.K., called me. Medvedev reported that another accident had occurred at the CHPP.

- What's happened? I asked.

"The boiler unit failed," Medvedev replied, "and we only got the second one yesterday." put in for repairs. There is no reserve.

I knew Sergei Konstantinovich as an experienced business executive and a good leader. Here, at the plant, he was appointed quite recently, but, apparently, he has already got up to speed on the matter. And now he correctly assessed the situation: with the shutdown of the unit, there was a threat of stopping metallurgical production, and hence a disruption in the production of weapons.

I immediately went to the CHP. Here, in addition to the director, the chief power engineer of the plant, N.V. Godzev, head of the CHPP V.P. Vakulenko, workers of the heating department E.G. Rabinovich and D.Ya. Feyderov, senior master of the boiler room I.I. Razumov. Nikolai Vladimirovich Godzev reported on the

situation. - What are you

thinking of doing? "We need repairs," the chief

power engineer answered. - Clearly needed. But it will require, if I am not

mistaken, up to 40 hours? - Yes,

Comrade People's Commissar, at least 36. - We cannot allow a stoppage

of production for such a period. - You can reduce this time if you make repairs on a hot boiler without waiting for cooling.

What time gain will this give us? "Thirty

hours, no less. - Who can do it?

"I can, Comrade Commissar,"

said Razumov. "I've had to do this job before. He spoke calmly, as if talking about something ordinary,

and therefore his words sounded especially weighty. In general, the whole appearance of Razumov inspired confidence. He was slightly above average height. Dense, even thick-set, with a simple, open Russian face, I liked him immediately.

Having received permission for a risky operation, Razumov put on a padded jacket, felt boots and a hat, smeared his face with fat. To determine the location of the accident, it was necessary to descend into the boiler, stopped, disconnected from the network, but still under pressure. The temperature in it reached almost 90 ° C. After closing the chimneys and turning on the fans, in order to at least slightly reduce the heat, Razumov, tying himself with a rope, for which he was supposed to be pulled out of the boiler at the first signal, entered the gas duct - a ten-meter corridor with an approximately one-meter cross section. He quickly discovered the damage. Seven and a half hours after the shutdown, the boiler was already operating at full capacity, the plant received energy, and the planned targets were met.

Ivan Ivanovich continued to work just as heroically in the future, he was awarded the order. At the end of the 1960s, he suffered a misfortune: due to someone's criminal oversight, the hatch of one of the wells was left open at the thermal power plant, and during the descent of the drainage, Razumov fell into it. He had to amputate both legs ... But even after that, Ivan Ivanovich remained a vigorous, strong man with his unbending spirit. The heroism of everyday everyday work,

the selflessness of workers, engineers, designers, and production managers filled with vital content the measures taken by the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks and the State Defense Committee to improve the country's military economy. Knowing how dear the country is, how every kilogram of raw materials, metal, fuel, every kilowatt-hour of electricity is needed for victory, people achieved savings literally on every operation, in every link of the technological process, in all types of production.

In 1943, Mikhail Leonidovich Kataev, chief metallurgist of one of the factories People's Commissariat, a remarkable specialist in his field, reported:

– We switched a number of parts to casting, sheet forging and forging instead of forgings. Based on the experience of shop No. 34, instead of casting bronze in earthen molds, it was decided to use centrifugal casting of bushings in a mold. This made it possible to eliminate defects due to blockages, gas shells, to sharply reduce the allowances for machining bushings, and to reduce metal consumption to a minimum.

“And everything goes off without a hitch?”

No, there are failures. From the very beginning, we were faced with delamination of the metal. Serious defect. But they quickly found a way out - they began to heat up the mold, more tightly control the temperature of the metal. E.A. was

present during our conversation. Satele. – Eduard

Adamovich, you were recently at Motovilikha. Do metallurgists introduce similar methods there? – Yes, we have

organized an exchange of experience. These methods are widely used in Motovilikha, and at other factories.

Later, we calculated that in 1943 only one of the plants saved 3.69 million rubles under the rationalization item. Many of our other factories have given the same significant increase in the production of weapons.

In 1943, at the plant, where I.A. Ostroushko, for the first time in the Soviet Union used recuperative heating of gas in furnaces equipped with injection burners. This reduced gas consumption by 25 percent and made it possible, when operating on low-calorie coal gas, to heat the metal to the temperatures required for forging and rolling. It was possible to significantly improve the flameless combustion of gas in ovens.

For the first time in the country, the factories of the People's Commissariat also used stamping of parts on horizontal forging machines. This method, developed by engineers F.D. Bichukin, M.A. Kislov and A.F. Isakov, made it possible to release a significant number of machines and use them in other operations.

The growth in the production of weapons could be hampered by the lack of tungsten and vanadium, necessary for the manufacture of high-speed steel, without which tool production cannot exist. It was necessary to find a way to make tools from carbon steel instead of high-speed steel. Within three months at the M.A. Ivanov team of engineers and technologists headed by the deputy chief technologist of the plant V.P. Boltushkin and head of the laboratory I.G. Vinogradov struggled with this task. The workers of the Moscow Higher Technical School named after N.E. Bauman M.N. Larin, G.I. Granovsky and others.

After persistent research, the most rational design and sharpening geometry were found, which dramatically increased the tool life, made of carbon steel. This resulted in savings of 400,000 pieces of tools per year. And the introduction of forced sharpening of the tool made it possible to reduce its consumption by another 10-15 percent. In addition, the restoration of the tool was organized, its surfacing with high-speed steel was mastered, which ensured its savings of up to 10 tons per month. All this gave an economic effect of about 3 million rubles.

Thus, putting into action, first of all, our own reserves and capabilities, we sought to increase production, reduce the cost, material and energy intensity of products, and improve their quality. And of course, a huge role was played by the high fighting spirit of the workers, their enthusiasm, based on a clear organization of production.

During a trip to the plant, headed by B.A. Fratkin, I met my old friend Ivan Ivanovich Levin there. Before the war, he worked as a senior foreman, but now, in 1943, he was in charge of one of the largest and most important workshops at the plant - the receiver. And managed successfully. By the way, in the post-war period, I.I. Levin grew up in

a major economic manager, became a Hero of Socialist Labor, general director of a large production association.

Even then, in the rhythm of the barrel shop, his handwriting was clearly felt. Ivan Ivanovich was demanding, sometimes even cool, but fair and attentive to people. I knew that he showed special concern for young workers, linking with them the prospects for improving production and developing the shop. After discussing production issues, I asked Levin to introduce me to his pets. We went to the shop.

"Here are my guardsmen," said Levin.

There were teenagers behind
the machines. - And how do they cope

with the task? - In the Guards way, - Ivan Ivanovich smiled. - You, Comrade People's Commissar, do not look that they did not come out tall. Their grip is real, strong. Well, they are all in my Komsomol youth brigades. And there is only one law of work: "In labor, as in battle." The law is

correct, of course. But still, do not forget what age they are. "We remember, Comrade People's Commissar, we always remember. Levin's face hardened. - Is it
can you forget for a moment?

- Feed the children as much as you can so that they grow better. More sweets for them.

We are trying, Comrade Commissar. On occasion, we reward good work with jam or sweets. I keep them in my fund especially for them. We met a
black-eyed boy. When he saw us, he wanted to scurry to the side,
behind the machine, but I

stopped him:

- What is your name? -

Vanya ... Ivan

Pryadikhin. - How

many years? -

Seventeenth ... -

Where do you come from? -

From near Smolensk. -

Where did you get your degree? -

At the vocational school. Do you do

shift assignments? - I'm doing it.

150-160 percent.

Well done, Vanya. Are you very tired? - No, not really. Subsequently, Ivan Pryadikhin headed one of the best Komsomol youth brigades at the plant. Komsomolskaya Pravda wrote about the experience and

achievements of this brigade. But the name of the foreman of the first female front-line brigade at the plant, Maria Baturina, already in those days of 1943, when I was at the plant, was well known in our industry. Leonid Gavrilovich Mezentsev, party organizer of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, introduced me to her. A short, slender, pretty girl, Masha Baturina answered my greeting with an unexpectedly strong handshake for such a fragile figure, downright manly.

- So this is the same Baturina? I smiled. "And you looked like such a giantess to me!"

The girl was confused.

"But you are doing a great job. So your deeds are indeed gigantic. Does everyone in your team work like this? - All. -

Having recovered from embarrassment, the girl smiled, and her face seemed to be illuminated from within with a clear and pure light. - Here is Anya Litvinskaya. She was evacuated from Leningrad. And this is Raisa Koganovich. Her parents died near Mogilev during the bombing... Ira Lapteva. I recently received a funeral for my husband. She has two children...

- And how is it managed? We

help her. And now the children are in kindergarten. Actually, we live like one family. Both in joy and in sorrow - together. There are 15 of us in the brigade. It is easier to live and work because we are together. In our team, each worker has mastered two or three professions. We fulfill the norms by 400-500, and even by 600 percent.

"The war burned each of them with fire," Mezentsev said. - And Baturin grief is not passed. She lost her husband: he died in the first days of the war. Masha is raising her daughter.

In conversations, the women did not say a word about the difficulties. Neither here, at this plant, nor at others, I remember a case when any girl asked to be transferred to an easier job. And women worked in metallurgical and even blacksmith shops. At that time, a significant part of the workers were women: welders, moulders, loaders, crane operators, not to mention such professions as turners, locksmiths, millers. Yes, our women worked so skillfully, selflessly, wherever their labor was needed. Five, six, or

even ten times overfulfilled the norms. And it was not just one episode, not a surge. This went on for a decade, and a month, and a quarter, and a year. As long as the war lasted... An amazing strength, an incomprehensible margin of safety lurked in these fragile creatures, who, in a difficult time for the Motherland,

took on a significant share of men's affairs and worries. I have already written about this, but I think no one will judge me for the fact that my memories brought me back to this exciting topic ... As now, I see a gloomy machine shop at night, I clearly hear the Katyusha melody floating above the uniform hum of many machine tools. Perhaps it was precisely because the noise of the machines was the original and only "musical accompaniment" of the song that it especially touched the soul. The women who worked on the machines sang. The foreman explained: "They are working the second shift in a row. And they sing to ward off sleep. There was a military delegation in the shop today. They talked about the front, about the battles with the Nazis. So the girls stayed to give the front more products ...

Earth bow to you, wonderful workers! Your contribution to the common cause of Victory is

invaluable. I want to emphasize that these women, all the home front workers during the war years, did not work like that on orders. Yes, and what order can provide such work! They were impelled to complete dedication by the consciousness of duty to the Motherland, responsibility for it. And then - not single heroes worked like that. Everyone worked like that... And this plant, in one of the workshops of which I heard an unforgettable performance of "Katyusha", gave the front 20 thousand guns. In 1945, for the successful completion of the tasks of the State Defense Committee, he was awarded the Order of the Patriotic War, 1st degree. To the address of M.I. Kalinin sent a telegram: "... the high consciousness and heroic work of the workers and employees of the plant ensured the uninterrupted supply of the Red Army with powerful Soviet anti-aircraft artillery."

In the 1960s I visited the plant again. I did not recognize the former factory buildings. New, modern buildings have grown. The factory grounds looked like a lovingly manicured park. One of the plant's green workshops is a beautiful greenhouse. Workers rest here, gain strength during the lunch break. The plant now

produces peaceful products. But here they sacredly honor the memory of the labor feat of people in the Great Patriotic War. In the wonderful factory museum, the rarest relics are samples of the products of those fiery years. There are also stands telling about the noble people of the plant. Young workers entering into working life get acquainted here with history, with those who created and increased factory glory with their labor. A wonderful tradition!.. I remember how the production of Pe-2

bombers was suspended at one aircraft factory. The reason is delays in firing machine guns, and delays that cannot be eliminated in

air. I received a message about this from Moscow in the morning - it was transferred from the people's commissariat to the plant where I was then. Everything that was connected with the creation, fine-tuning and serial production of aircraft machine guns at the plant was in charge of the deputy chief designer V.P. Kamzolov. I called him to the principal's office. He came quickly, apparently, he was also at this odd time at the plant. I have already mentioned this worker, he was well known as an energetic and competent engineer, a man of perseverance and principles. In this case, that person was exactly what was needed.

"Hello, Comrade Kamzolov," I turned to him when he entered the office. – Get ready for Kazan immediately. There, due to our fault, planes were not sent to the front yesterday. Comrade Stalin knows. "Of course, Comrade Commissar. "Everything must be done to correct the situation today. - Will try. – Yes, try. The plane is waiting. On it and return. A few hours later Kamzolov was in Kazan. It turned out that the cartridge case was wedged in the machine gun during test firing after being installed on the aircraft. By the time our representative arrived, the machine guns on five planes had already stalled. This means fifteen machine guns - at that time three were installed on each Pe-2.

Checking the very first machine guns made it possible to identify the cause of the delay. It was easily eliminated, but required a certain skill and skill. Therefore, Kamzolov right here, at the factory airfield, organized the training of people who installed machine guns on the Pe-2, debugging them. Well-adjusted machine guns were checked on the spot: they shot at the end of a woodpile piled up not far from the runway.

Having finished the work and having installed all 15 machine guns, they drew up an act. The necessary signatures could only be made in the morning, as the exhausted comrades had already left to rest a little. Kamzolov decided not to disturb them and decided to return to the factory. He returned late at night. I met him in the corridor of the plant administration, where I had just come from the assembly shop. Kamzolov, with visible joy, reported to me about

the completion of the task. I hugged him for shoulders, led him down the corridor. - Tell me, tell me! He briefly reported what he had done. "Well done," I praised him. - Let's act, I will report to Comrade Stalin. Kamzolov even changed his face, muttered something indistinct about signatures, about the fact that, they say, the debugger will bring the act. – Didn't expect from you... Immediately back. And don't come back without action! A few hours later, Kamzolov presented me with an act signed in full form. - That's another matter! Rest. It was barely gray outside the window. Dawn was approaching. Since the announcement of the suspension the release of Pe-2 passed the day ...

With V.P. Kamzolov and with the same machine gun - we are talking about the 12.7-mm Berezin machine gun - I have one more memory. It concerns the design refinement of weapons. It was delayed due to the fact that it took a large number of changes in the size of parts and assemblies. There was a bottleneck. In the evening I came to the designers. "Couldn't it be that a mistake has crept into your calculations?" - It shouldn't be, Dmitri Fyodorovich. - Need to check. Let's do this together. Do not you mind? Who will take this job with me? – Yes, probably, Kamzolov is most convenient. - Well, Comrade Kamzolov, let's check? - Let's check, comrade Commissar. - Where can you retire here so as not to disturb anyone?

– In the central laboratory. - Went.

By 5

o'clock in the morning, the analysis and verification of the calculations were completed. It turned out that there really are no errors in them. So, it was necessary to speed up the work

on fine-tuning. I looked at the pale Kamzolov with sunken eyes: "Are you tired? Nothing, now let's warm up, wash ourselves, as if by hand. And there is an excellent remedy for fatigue, you know what? -

No ... -

Kvass! Ordinary Russian bread kvass! Kvass was found in the factory canteen. He really cheered us up and we continued to work. At a crucial, turning point in

the war, people seem to have turned on the deepest reserves of their spiritual and physical strength. This, first of all, made it possible to increase production and provide the army with the necessary amount of weapons and other means. Our industry in 1943 began to supply the front with much more military equipment than the industry of Germany and its satellites supplied to the fascist army. For example, tanks and self-propelled artillery mounts, artillery pieces and mortars, we produced during this year more than twice as much as Germany. The number of guns in the active army in 1943 increased five times compared with the beginning of the war. Moreover, the share of large calibers has sharply increased. 130 thousand guns of all kinds were fired by artillery factories in 12 months, that is, almost 11 thousand every month!

It would seem that on such a scale, one can neglect dozens and even more so units of various products that were listed in the plans of our people's commissariat. But no, this is the strength of the plan, schedule, in general, truly disciplined, organized work, that they do not allow any deviations. This is a law, which, in fact, is such as long as it is strictly observed. And as for units, without them there are neither tens, nor hundreds, nor thousands. And if this axiom is true in itself, then in relation to weapons it is doubly and thrice important and significant. After all, every cannon, rifle, every machine gun is a destroyed enemy, it is a protected span of native land.

I always had at hand a schedule of monthly, weekly and daily output of products by the enterprises of the people's commissariat. It was developed on the basis of a plan approved by the GKO. It should be said that in order to improve the management of the war economy, starting in 1943, control over the work of the defense industries began to be carried out by a specially created GKO Bureau. Directly for the supply of weapons in the Council of People's Commissars and the State Planning Committee of the USSR, the deputy chairman of the State Planning Committee, Petr Ivanovich Kirpichnikov, was responsible. We have established the closest business contacts with him, full mutual understanding. The State Planning Committee of the USSR during this period switched to planning the production of tanks, aviation, artillery, ammunition not quarterly, as before, but every month. These plans were just approved by the State Defense Committee.

The output schedule of the enterprises of the people's commissariat served not only as a great help in the organization of management and control, but also as the most important source of comprehensive information. It reflected the quantitative indicators of production, the time of receipt of raw materials and materials at manufacturing plants, the timing of the development and production of new types of weapons, the dispatch of weapons to the front. There was also a map of the country's railway network, which recorded the movement of trains, and often even individual wagons with materials and raw materials for factories. Moreover, the heads of the main departments, the main supply and distribution department and the transport department of the people's commissariat were required to know at any time about the location of the goods and, if necessary, take immediate measures to strictly comply with the schedule.

Once an artillery factory, whose director was B.A. Khazanov, instead of 25 guns Passed 24 on schedule. Having received a message about this, I called N.E. Nosovsky:

- Do you know that Khazanov missed one gun? - I know, Dmitry

Fedorovich. - How could this happen?

- During the shooting, some defects

were discovered, and some guns were removed. As a result, one gun was not enough to deliver on schedule. But tomorrow Khazanov promised to enter the schedule. - Did you talk to Khazanov yourself? - No, Dmitry Fyodorovich. The chief engineer of the head

office spoke to him. - Call Khazanov. Nosovsky got

up, hurrying to his place to contact the plant. "No, no," I stopped him, "call now, from my phone!" Connected quickly.

By the way, our communications during the war, as a rule, worked

securely.

Hello, Khazanov? - Nosovsky spoke, looking in my direction: the director, they say, is in place. The director really was there, although there, in Siberia, it was already well after midnight. - How did you allow that you disrupted the schedule today?

Listening to what the director answered him, Nosovsky frowned, fiddled with the telephone cord. - OK. Okay, I say. - Nosovsky again glanced

in my direction and asked Khazanov: - Do you know that the GKO controls the implementation of the schedule on a daily basis? Yep, it's known! Very good. So I repeat: every day! Take note of this and don't do anything like this again. Yes, and the People's Commissar for disrupting the schedule will not pat on the head. Clear? So that's great. Goodbye. Nosovsky hung up. "Khazanov has already liquidated his debt, Dmitry Fedorovich. Today schedule

executed with an excess of one gun.

The episode I'm talking about is one of many that happened every day throughout the war. But just because of this, it is very revealing. During the war years, the fulfillment of plans and schedules at all levels and at all levels was not only a primary economic, but also our main Party concern. And, I emphasize, it was about the timely delivery of weapons to the front, up to a separate gun, air gun, machine gun, machine gun or rifle. Our people's commissariat, as well as other defense people's commissariats, often received additional tasks from the GKO. As a rule, they were associated with an increase in the production of certain types of weapons or components. And if at first,

especially in the first period of the war, these tasks had a very painful effect on the rhythm of production, then in 1943 such a developed base was created in the industry that made it possible to successfully cope with any extra-planned tasks. Yes, and the central apparatus of the People's Commissariat by this time was a well-functioning mechanism, it worked clearly, efficiently, without interruptions. We have developed a flexible system of interaction with other departments, with representatives of the Headquarters, employees of the General Staff, the Main Artillery and Main Armored Directorates of the Red Army, military leaders of the front and army levels. By the summer of 1943, the troops received a significant number of 57-mm anti-tank, new regimental and divisional guns, 122-mm and 152-mm self-propelled artillery mounts, more powerful anti-aircraft, tank and aircraft guns, automatic small arms with improved combat characteristics. Not only the current needs of the army in the field were fully met, but also the systematic improvement of the organizational structure of the Armed Forces. In the combined arms armies, the transition to the corps system and, accordingly, the creation of corps artillery were completed. Armored and mechanized

troops have become the main strike and maneuver means of our ground forces. Appeared

the ability to carry out measures for the organizational massing of tanks. Homogeneous tank armies of a new type were formed. By the middle of 1943, there were five such armies in the fronts. All this required a large number of tanks, and hence tank guns, machine guns, and ammunition for them.

Large artillery and mortar formations of the reserve of the Supreme High Command were created. Qualitative

improvement continued and organizational changes also took place in the Air Force and the Air Defense Forces of the country. The task of gaining air supremacy on the entire Soviet-German front became realistically feasible.

In a word, the Red Army was ready for broad offensive operations. It numbered over 6.5 million people, 105 thousand guns and mortars, more than 10 thousand tanks and self-propelled guns and the same number of combat aircraft. Commanders, political workers, all the soldiers have acquired the richest and most versatile combat experience. These were people who had received a solid hardening in past battles, who knew the bitterness of failures and the joy of victories, who possessed high military skills and, no less important, the qualities of patriots and internationalists, and confidence in

defeating the enemy. And what about the enemy? By carrying out emergency measures, the Hitlerite leadership succeeded for some time in increasing the production of military equipment and weapons. For example, tanks and self-propelled guns in 1943 were produced by 73, and aircraft - by 71 percent more than in 1942. Particular emphasis was placed on the production of new types of weapons. By the summer of 1943, the Nazi troops operating in the East were equipped with the latest TV Panther and T-VI Tiger tanks, as well as Ferdinand and Jagdpanzer self-propelled guns. "Jagdpanzer" for the bulkiness of the soldiers nicknamed "elephant". The new Focke-Wulf-190 and Henschel-129 fighters entered service with aviation.

To conduct an offensive operation, the enemy chose a relatively narrow section of the front in the Kursk region, on which, during the winter battles, our troops advanced far to the west. Cut off this ledge, encircle and defeat the troops of the Central and Voronezh fronts, and then strike at the rear of the Southwestern Front - such was the plan of the Nazis. It was codenamed "Citadel". On April 15, in an operational

order, Hitler, in his usual pompous manner, declared: "I have decided ... to launch the Citadel offensive ... This offensive is of decisive importance ... The victory at Kursk should be a torch for the whole world."²⁷

The strike forces of the fascist military machine were concentrated in the Kursk direction. Here, according to the testimony of the West German historian K. Zentner, everything was concentrated "that the industry of Germany and mobilized Europe was capable of." The enemy grouping consisted of about 900 thousand soldiers and officers, up to 10 thousand guns and mortars, almost 2700 tanks and over 2 thousand aircraft. The main stake was placed on delivering a sudden massive strike by tank troops in the narrow sections of the breakthrough. This

grouping was opposed by our troops of the Central and Voronezh fronts, numbering over 1.3 million people, more than 19 thousand guns and mortars, almost 3.5 thousand tanks and self-propelled guns, 2900 aircraft. In the rear of these two fronts, the third, the Steppe Front, was concentrated.

Superiority over the enemy, and impressive superiority, was obvious. Nevertheless, the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command, having guessed the enemy's plan, decided not to attack, but deliberately go on the defensive, defeat the enemy's strike forces and thereby create favorable conditions for a general offensive. This decision has fully justified itself.

²⁷ "Top secret! For command only! The strategy of Nazi Germany in the war against USSR: Documents and materials. M., 1967. S. 502.

The Citadel has collapsed. With it, the last hope of fascist Germany to turn in its favor the development of events in the war imposed by it on the Soviet Union collapsed. It seems to me that it was then that those who inspired, developed and implemented "drang nah osten", one immutable truth, truly understood. They tried to make her forget with the help of hysterical cries about the blitzkrieg and the "colossus with feet of clay." But it was powerfully reminded of the brutal defeats near Moscow and Stalingrad, and now here, on the Kursk Bulge. This truth, formulated by our glorious ancestors, says: "Whoever comes to us with a sword will perish by the sword. On that stood and will stand the Russian land!

This should not be forgotten by today's militant politicians, who, in
in anti-Soviet frenzy they are trying to brandish a nuclear sword ...

I remember July 1943 to the smallest detail. During the week we followed with intense attention the course of the defensive battle that began on July 5th. And then the Soviet troops launched a decisive counteroffensive. It developed into a general offensive, which did not stop until the complete defeat of Nazi Germany.

On August 5, a month after the start of the Battle of Kursk, the first salute during the war was fired in honor of the liberation of Orel and Belgorod. It became a kind of milestone that marked for the Soviet people, and for the whole world, an event to which we had been moving so long and hard. A

radical turning point in the war has come to an end, a final, irreversible turning point.

Chapter 3 Final

The offensive continues

The defeat of fascist Germany in the Battle of Kursk showed the whole world that the Soviet Union and its Armed Forces were quite capable of winning the war on their own, without outside help. For 50 days of fighting, the enemy

lost over half a million soldiers and officers. Of the more than 70 Nazi divisions that participated in the Battle of Kursk, 30 were defeated. Hitler's Luftwaffe lost 3.5 thousand aircraft. Air supremacy has completely and now definitively passed to the Soviet Air Force. Enemy armored forces suffered especially heavy damage. The Nazis lost over a quarter of the tanks concentrated on the Soviet-German front. And the remaining divisions were badly battered. "As a result of the failure of the Citadel operation," G. Guderian, the general inspector of the armored forces of fascist Germany, later testified, "we suffered a decisive defeat. The armored forces, replenished with such great difficulty, were put out of action for a long time due to heavy losses in people and equipment. Gunsmiths, like all Soviet people, rejoiced at the new remarkable victory of our army. The battle on the Kursk Bulge was not accidentally called the battle of weapons. And our weapons won this battle.

But the joy of victory did not prevent us from soberly assessing the merits and demerits of our products that passed the most severe test in the Battle of Kursk - the battle test.

Of course, the weapons of the enemy were also studied. Shortly after the Battle of Kursk, we organized an inspection of the trophies. Getting acquainted with the "Tigers" and "Panthers", I paid attention, in particular, to the technical solution of the sighting device of their guns. We proposed to scientists and designers to develop similar, but with better characteristics, sights for domestic weapons systems. This problem was solved in a short time. The study of weapons captured from the enemy, the analysis of information,

coming from various sources to the people's commissariat, allowed us to conclude that although it is inferior to ours in quality, it has noticeably improved in comparison with previous years of the war. The Battle of Kursk confirmed our earlier conclusion that the installation of an 88-mm cannon on Nazi T-VI tanks gives them approximately a double advantage in the range of aimed fire over T-34s armed with a 76-mm gun. In addition, by the end of 1943, the Wehrmacht began to receive new, heavier anti-tank and anti-aircraft artillery systems. The combat capabilities of enemy assault guns and aircraft, as well as its air defense, have increased.

There was no doubt that the Hitlerite leadership, after the crushing defeat at Kursk, would make new desperate attempts to make up for losses in weapons, to eliminate the backlog in its most important types. The largest artillery and aviation firms and factories in Europe worked on fulfilling military orders, including Krupp, Seinkel, Messerschmitt, Zeiss, as well as Rheinmetall in Germany, Schneider-Creusot in France, Ansaldo in Italy, Madsen in Denmark, Siderius in Holland and hundreds of others. Modernized field and heavy artillery guns, anti-aircraft, tank and anti-tank guns with an increased firing range and an initial projectile speed of 1000 meters per second or more descended from their conveyors. Increased armor protection of tanks and self-propelled guns. We had every reason to believe that the structure of armament production in fascist Germany would be more

and more oriented towards an increase in the production of anti-tank and field artillery, and other means of conducting defensive combat operations. Indeed, by the end of 1943, as a result of the offensive operations of the Red Army carried out after the Battle of Kursk, the enemy was expelled from a vast territory - from most of Ukraine, from the Krasnodar Territory, Kursk, Smolensk, Oryol and Rostov regions. From month to month, the strength of the strikes of the Soviet troops increased. The strategic reserves of Nazi Germany were depleted. Enormous resources

were required, and they became more and more limited. The Wehrmacht lost the ability to conduct major offensive operations. He could only lead the defense. But this required Nazi Germany and its satellites

to switch the production capacities already involved to the production of weapons that could somehow increase the defensive potential of the Nazi troops. The Nazi leadership took measures to stabilize the situation on the Soviet-German front after the defeat at Kursk. In the summer of 1943, it transferred here from the west 14 divisions, large aviation forces. This, by the way, predetermined the

success of the landing of the Anglo-American troops in Italy. However, the force of the Red Army's strikes was such that neither the transfer of new divisions to the Soviet-German front, nor the feverish deliveries of weapons could stop our offensive. Of course, the enemy did not accept his defeat. Literally every step to the west was given to our troops with a fight, we had to break into the defenses created in advance, in depth, to overcome the fierce resistance of the Nazis. This put before everyone who provided the troops with weapons and military

equipment the task of building up the offensive, primarily the firepower of the troops. In particular, it was necessary to equip our tanks with a more powerful gun. I have already mentioned the enemy's 88 mm tank gun, the range of aimed fire of which was twice the capabilities of our 76 mm tank gun. The creation of a new, more powerful tank gun was entrusted to the Central Artillery Design Bureau at the beginning of 1943. At the same time, the design bureau of plant No. 9 also worked. In the second half of December 1943, I.V. Stalin summoned Malyshev, Vannikov, Fedorenko and me to the Kremlin. After greeting us, he pointed to the chairs

long table. After we settled in, Stalin expressed dissatisfaction with the development and installation of an 85-mm gun on the T-34 tank. We ourselves knew that things were not going well here. Nevertheless, the harsh assessment that Stalin gave them was extremely unpleasant for us. Naturally, words were

useless here. We needed a result, and the result was fast. And he hasn't been there yet. None of the 85-mm guns developed by the design bureaus could be put into production without serious design improvements. This was well known to everyone present, and we sat in silence. Questions to us I.V. Stalin did not ask. After walking several times around the study,

he went up to his desk, took some sheets

from it and, turning towards us, began to read them aloud. It turned out to be a letter from the commander of one of the divisions of the army in the field. I.V. Stalin specifically singled out from this letter the place where it was reported that the 45-mm and even 76-mm guns mounted on tanks were not effective against enemy tanks, especially with the latest modifications of the Tigers. "Tigers" are practically impossible to hit on the forehead, - wrote the divisional commander. - You have to either pass them through yourself and shoot at the stern, or fire at enemy tanks moving towards their neighbors, that is, along the side. The T-34 needs a more powerful gun." It should be noted that Stalin was always attentive to requests from the front and took

the most decisive measures to satisfy them. And this time, having finished reading the letter, he briefly threw: - The 85-mm gun should be installed on the T-34 tank. From the beginning of next year, it must be released only

with this gun!

The task is very clear. It must be carried out. We got up. Stalin once again walked around the office and said: - Go immediately to the factory. A wagon has been ordered for you at the Yaroslavsky railway station. It will be attached to the next outgoing train. Don't waste time.

We left the office. There

was less than a week left before the New Year. And it was necessary to solve a lot of engineering, design and organizational and technological problems, and solve them quickly. We hardly

slept on the train. We discussed the work plan in detail. We decided: first to Yelyan. In the morning, Elyan met us at the plant with the chief technologist Gordeev. When asked about business, they answered that, in general, they are going well. However, Yelyan, having chosen the moment,

whispered in my ear: - It's a bad thing, the

breech was torn apart again. It was about the cannon about which our call to the Kremlin, to Stalin,

took place. It became clear that together we have nothing to do here yet. I suggested that Malyshev, Vannikov and Fedorenko go to the tank factory. It is expedient for me to stay with Elyan. That's what they decided on.

I asked Yelyan: -

Are there blanks for new breech-loaders? -

Yes, I

have. - Pick up a team of locksmiths, millers, turners, let them immediately start manufacturing. Work in shifts. By the morning of the next day, make at least one breech and start testing! At the same time, it was necessary

to carefully understand the reasons for the failures. I talked with designers, testers, looked through laboratory analyzes of breakdowns. Several times I visited the workshop, where work on the manufacture of blanks began. There was no need to rush people.

Everyone worked with full dedication. And yet it seemed that my presence somehow speeds up the work.

In the morning, the next day after arrival, I call from the hotel, although I left the factory

only at dawn, literally two hours ago: – How
are you?
Yelyan

answered: - Two shots were fired from the new cannon. There
are no crashes yet. - Keep testing. I will
now. After a quick breakfast, I arrived at the test site. Everyone, from the director to the
support service, is closely following the tests. Already made 10, 11, 12 shots - the gun behaves
normally. It passed the first test. Eliminated identified defects. Four days later, the tests were
continued. They ended

successfully. The best qualities were shown by the D5-T-85 gun designed by F.F. Petrov. It
was adopted. True, in order for it to be installed in the turret of the T-34 tank, it was necessary to
expand its shoulder strap by almost 200 mm. The D5-T-85 gun was widely used on the IS-1 and
KV-85 tanks, as well as on the SU-85 self-propelled artillery mount.

As for the ZIS-S-53 gun, it needed to be finalized. Looking ahead, I will say that it was
brought into service in a short time and was also put into service. The successful layout of the
recoil device, the use of a clip-type breech made it possible to install this gun in the T-34 tank
without changing the size of the turret.

The armor-piercing projectile of this gun reliably hit the armor of a heavy German tank.
T-VI at a distance of 1000 meters.

Thus, our most massive medium tank - the thirty-four - received more powerful weapons at
the beginning of 1944. And on the IS-2 heavy tank, the 122-mm D-25T cannon successfully
passed combat tests even earlier. By the way, field tests of the tank with this gun took place in
the presence of K.E. Voroshilov. Shooting was carried out at a captured German tank at a
distance of 1500 meters. The shell pierced the frontal armor and tore off the stern sheet along the
lines of the welds.

- This is the kind of weapon that the tankers need, - said Kliment Efremovich then.

Subsequently, the gun confirmed its high combat qualities, became a real thunderstorm for
enemy tanks and assault guns. It was also armed with the ISU-122 self-propelled artillery mount,
which enjoyed great love among our gunners.

In 1944, another artillery system began to enter the troops - the SU-100 self-propelled
artillery mount mounted on the T-34 chassis. It was armed with a 100-mm D-1 S cannon. As a
cover and escort gun, designed mainly for direct fire, the SU-100 turned into a real enemy tank
destroyer. At a distance of 500 meters, it pierced armor 160 mm thick, and at 2000 m - 125 mm.

In terms of the main, decisive combat characteristics, the main types of our weapons were
superior to those of the enemy. But this superiority was given special significance by the fact that,
as a rule, we supplied the front with new weapons systems much earlier than the enemy, and in
such quantities that ensured the implementation of the ideas and plans of the Supreme High
Command.

I remember that at the very beginning of 1944, at one of the meetings in the State Planning
Commission, N.D.

Yakovlev. - The active army, - said Nikolai Dmitrievich, - is fully provided with the necessary
weapons. At the same time, the proportion of modern weapons has increased significantly. There
is also a considerable supply of it in the reserve of the Headquarters at the bases of the Center.
Despite the losses, by the beginning of 1944, compared with January 1942, the saturation of
troops with weapons had increased by more than 25 times in terms of machine guns, mortars of
various calibers - 5-8 times, anti-tank rifles - 17 times, anti-tank 45-mm and 57- mm guns - 7
times, anti-aircraft weapons - 1.5-2 times. The saturation of the troops has also increased significantly

optical devices. Named N.D.

Yakovlev, the figures and facts testified to the high level of technical equipment of the troops and forces achieved by the final period of the war. This created strong material prerequisites for preparing in the shortest possible time and successfully carrying out offensive operations of the Soviet Armed Forces, huge in scope and goals, the volume of forces and means involved. As for the enterprises of the armaments industry, they were able to work rhythmically, providing both the planned supply of the army in the field and the best conditions for labor and the use of equipment.

Gone are the days when military units approached the factory gate, which were immediately handed newly assembled and tested rifles, when guns that had not yet cooled down after testing were loaded into trains directly from the workshops and, together with military units, went to the front.

But quite recently, it would seem, just a few months ago, we were continually required to speed up the dispatch of regular batches of weapons to the front. On one of the April days of the forty-third year, in the period of preparation for the decisive battles of the war, I.V. called me. Stalin.

"Comrade Ustinov," he said after greeting, "I just spoke to General Konev. He asks to expedite the delivery of artillery to the Steppe Front. We support this request. What can the armed forces do to fulfill it?"

"We guarantee planned delivery, Comrade Stalin," I replied. - And in order to accelerate it, you need to turn to the factories.

Explain to people the importance of the moment. They will understand and help the front. - I think we will fulfill the request of the front. - All right, Comrade Ustinov. So I will tell Konev. Putting the telephone receiver on the device, I bent over the schedule of the artillery factories. A.I. Bykhovskoy platforms for loading should be served in a day. Can they speed up the shipment?

I'm calling the factory. The telephone operator at the factory switchboard replies: - There is no director. Went to assembly shop. - Let's assembly. The deputy head of the department answered. - Do you have Bykhovsky? - No, comrade Commissar. About five minutes ago he called, said he was coming to us, but not his.

How are things at the assembly? "We're moving ahead of schedule, Comrade People's Commissar. - And what about the batch that you have to ship tomorrow? - All the guns are ready, Comrade People's Commissar, but most of them have not yet been painted. "If we give platforms, will you be able to send the guns today?" - Let's do it. We will prepare the guns for shipment. - Report to the director. Platforms will. Tell the people: the front is asking for our help. He urgently needs your guns, you know, urgently! Tell them that this is also Stalin's request. The next day, Bykhovsky

reported: the echelon with guns had left. I asked: did you manage to paint the guns? "Yes, Comrade People's Commissar, almost everything," answered Bykhovsky. - Four pieces were loaded only unpainted. But we created a brigade, she painted the guns on the go trains.

At the plant, which was headed by A.P. Zolotarev, created two such teams of women, who regularly made shuttle flights, painting the guns on the train.

So people tried to gain time in order to quickly, without delay, at least for

hour or minute, give weapons to the

front. Sometimes painting turned out with pollen: the guns still dried in the wind, in motion. But the front-line soldiers had no complaints against the gunsmiths, they said that with these sand-colored guns, they say, we would paint the

tail of the Nazis. The request of the Steppe Front transmitted by

Stalin was fulfilled. This was a little over six months ago. You can, of course, say: only six months. Yes, this period is relatively short. But we must not forget that these were not simple, but military six months, and even in the most difficult conditions of the war, having a special richness and significance - this was the time of the completion of a turning point in the war, a turning point both in the military, and in the political, and in the economic sense. But due to the incredible exertion of all forces, our people and army withstood the cruel onslaught of the enemy, did not allow him to overturn, crush themselves. And although the enemy had not yet been completely defeated, but now we were already at the top and methodically, with increasing force, drove him into the lair, from which he crawled out, we broke his back ...

That's what these six months and a little were like - from the eve of the Battle of Kursk to the beginning of the last, victorious stage

of the war. Now the situation has changed radically. We got the opportunity to maneuver production capacities and manpower, to systematically improve the organization of all types of work on the creation and production of weapons. It was as if we had gained a second wind - powerful, free, which, despite the remaining complexity of the wartime situation, made it possible not only to successfully cope with current tasks and plans, but also to create groundwork for the future. And this was one of the most tangible

evidence of the approach of the Victory. In 1944, in our industry, we began to widely and boldly apply an integrated method for the operational development of new types of weapons, new technological methods and schemes. And they did it completely painlessly for the main production, having, as a rule, a sufficient reserve of forces, means and time.

I remember how difficult and difficult this method was to implement. And not only because of the acute shortage of equipment, materials, people and, of course, time, but also because of the need to break out of the routine, rise above momentary tasks, look into tomorrow, think about the future.

It was at the plant headed by M.A. Ivanov, at the very beginning of 1942. Then the assembly shop of the plant began to literally choke, not having time to assemble incoming components and parts and issue finished products. Just at that time, the people's commissar's brigade worked at this group of factories, and I decided to see for myself what was the matter at the assembly. During the day and half of the night he studied the work of the workshop, its relations with other workshops, the organization of interaction between teams and sections. A fairly clear and precise picture of the production process gradually emerged, and the causes of failures were also identified. And then a method was determined by which these causes could be eliminated. The fact is that,

as I already noted, the plant was one of the first in the industry to transfer the production of weapons to a stream. At first, this gave a sharp jump in labor productivity and output. But now, apparently, the capabilities of the assembly shop in its current form were completely exhausted, and it could not cope with the growing number of components and parts coming into it. The time has come to take the next step: to divide the production process into even simpler operations that can be performed at specially equipped workplaces with much lower costs of machine tools, materials and time, as well as skilled labor. Moreover, workplaces should be interconnected by the most convenient lines and means of transportation, which required strict adherence to the sequence of individual operations and, therefore, the appropriate use of production space. Thus, a closed, technologically the most

expedient, most economical cycle of the production process.

Depending on the design features of a particular type of weapon, there could be more or less such cycles, but they all had to be linked to each other according to the same principle: a strict, optimal sequence of operations in terms of technology and organization of work, the shortest, most convenient and economical transport links, rational use of equipment, production areas and people. At the next RAM, after listening to the report of the head of the assembly shop B.F. Faizullin, I suggested: - What if you, comrade Faizullin, try to get out of

the stream? - So, Comrade People's Commissar, how will I get out of it? I have production, plan, everyone

hour, every minute: come on, come on weapons! And I have to give!

- That's right, it should. And we will not stop the assembly. Let it continue to work. But what the workshop manages to do now, in its current form, is the maximum that it cannot overcome, right?

"That's right,"

Fayzullin answered, still not understanding where I was driving. "So

we can't stop the shop. And we won't be able to rebuild its work without stopping, right? But it is necessary to rebuild, and radically, because the assembly has actually turned into a brake, right?

"That's right," Fayzullin lowered

his head. "So maybe we should make a

move?" How will your deputy pull the shop? - I think it will. "Then let's do it." The workshop continues

to work, and we organize a pilot area specifically for the creation and testing of new assembly methods. Comrade Faizullin will head it. What is your task?

And I explained in detail to my comrades my plan regarding the reorganization of the assembly process. - When the

new organization is mastered, we will transfer it in finished form to the main production. As for the area for the experimental site, we will release it, I have thoughts on this. Get down to business today. A few days later, the new site was up and running. A little later, a

new scheme for organizing the assembly process was introduced throughout the plant and gave a wonderful effect. But the experimental site continued to exist. Here, new methods, techniques and forms of organizing production, technological schemes, methods of the most economical - both in terms of labor, and in terms of time, materials, and energy for the implementation of intense plans for the production of weapons were born, tested and worked out. They were immediately introduced into production. This helped to constantly increase output and improve its quality. This method of quickly mastering new forms of production organization, especially when creating new types of weapons, new technology, has found wide application

in the industry. Gradually, it acquired quite definite organizational features. First of all, it was established who would master a new type of product, who could do it better and faster, in other words, the so-called undercoating was carried out. Then the most complex, labor-intensive, one might say, "command" parts and assemblies were singled out, on the production of which the success of the whole business depended to a decisive extent. Their development was entrusted, as a rule, to the most qualified machine tool builders, tool makers, and repairmen. All this - the necessary equipment, equipment, people - was concentrated in one place and represented a kind of core, a miniature cell in which all the links and features of the future large-scale production were embodied. When the development of a new product in this cell reached the proper level, it was transferred in its entirety to the enterprise entrusted with mass production, and ensured the rapid deployment of independent production.

Largely due to this method, many of the most complex, sometimes seemingly impossible technical, design and technological tasks were solved during the war years in an unprecedentedly short time, the development and mass production of weapons was ensured. The fact that only during 1943 alone 78 new divisions were created gives a clear idea of how many weapons were supplied to the army. 6.5 million soldiers and officers fought in the active army. The troops had 95.6 thousand guns and mortars, 9.6 thousand tanks and self-propelled guns, 10.2 thousand aircraft. In addition, there were over half a million soldiers and officers in the Stavka reserve. All this ensured superiority over the Nazi Wehrmacht both in terms of numbers and weapons.

On the whole, the military-political position of the Soviet Union, as noted by the joint meeting of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, the State Defense Committee and the Stavka, held at the end of 1943, was significantly strengthened. The decisive factor determining the further course of the war was the achievement by the Soviet Union of military and economic superiority over the enemy.

Based on a thorough analysis of the correlation of forces, the Central Committee of the Party and the State Defense Committee determined a plan of military operations for the final stage of the war. It was decided to launch an offensive on the front from Leningrad to the Crimea, inclusive. The offensive began with an operation that was supposed to end the blockade of Leningrad, to provide Soviet troops with access to the Baltic states. And on the evening of

January 27, fireworks thundered in honor of the complete liberation of the city of Lenin from the enemy blockade. Maybe because so much is connected with Leningrad in my life, I felt special excitement and pride. Having turned off the light in my office and pulled back the curtain, I stood at the window, looked at the multi-colored scattering of fireworks over Moscow and imagined Nevsky, the Hermitage, the institute hostel in Lesnoy, the Bolshevik factory ...

Severe trials fell on the lot of Leningrad. His sacrifices in the fight against the fascist invaders are great. As was later noted by the Extraordinary State Commission for the Establishment and Investigation of the Atrocities of the Nazi Invaders, more than 640 thousand people died of starvation in the blockade ring and almost 21 thousand from enemy air raids and artillery shelling.

On the target designation plans of the enemy artillery group that shelled Leningrad, the Bolshevik plant was marked with a special sign. The firing calculations were written out in white paint on the shields of the guns, and it was carried out methodically from day to day. The first shells exploded on the territory of the plant in early September. On November 22, as a result of the shelling, the main water main, air pipeline and electrical network were disabled. About the dramatic events that took place that day in the open-hearth shop of the plant, tells the "Melting Journal" that has survived from that time. Here is a copy of the notes made by the hand of the master Ilya Vasilievich Volkov. This copy was sent to me by comrades from Leningrad. The records show that the open-hearth furnace was filled with charge the day before, but from 11:20 a.m., under conditions of shelling, the supply of air, water, and

current was repeatedly interrupted. The following are the entries:

"From 12.35 to 12.55, from 13.00 to 13.10 there is no water. From 13.55 to 14.25 there is no air. From 14.28 to 15.00 there is no current. From 2:28 pm to 3:15 pm, from 3:50 pm to 4:00 pm, from 4:15 pm to 4:25 pm, from 4:30 pm to 4:40 pm there is no air." The hearts of the steelworkers sank painfully: for them the furnace was like a living being, but they were powerless to help it. The "Melting Journal" reflects the last minutes of open-hearth. "By the time the ferrochrome was delivered at 16.40, the temperature of the metal was moderate, but there was a hope of pouring the metal after heating with ferrochrome and heating the slag. At 4:50 p.m., the water and air supply stopped again, the slag and metal began to cool rapidly, and the chief electrician could not tell when the power supply was to be restored. At about 5:40 p.m., they informed the chief metallurgist that the metal in the furnace was "gantry" and asked for permission to release the melt into the ladle "on the goat" to free the furnace. The metallurgist allowed, and the smelting

was released normally, but completely without slag, which was all left in the furnace ... Due to lack of water, the furnace was smeared ... "

Instead of the usual 9 hours, the melt was in the furnace for 20 hours and 15 minutes. Taking off their felt hats, the steelworkers, numb with grief, said goodbye to the furnace. Casters, crane operators, shikhtari stood silently next to them ... Yes, the Bolshevik plant was a special object for the Nazis. During the period from September 4, 1941 to January 22, 1944, he was fired upon 68 times. 3178 shells exploded on its territory, of which 584 hit buildings and structures. The total duration of shelling was more than 260 hours. Only three of all production buildings did not have direct hits. But despite this, the plant, like the whole city, continued to live and work, continued to carry out planned tasks, give weapons to the front, and repair military equipment damaged in battles.

On September 19, 1941, a letter from the workers of the Bolshevik plant was published in the newspaper On Guard of the Motherland. It was written by veterans and seems to me so significant, so important for understanding the fundamental principle of the selfless stamina and courage of the Leningraders, as well as the entire Soviet people, shown during the war years, that I want to quote it here in full.

"FOR LENINGRAD! FOR OUR VICTORY!"

"Letter from the workers of the Bolshevik factory to the defenders of Leningrad Dear friends, brothers. Comrade soldiers and political workers! Severe and formidable days are going through our native, our beloved city. The enemy at the walls of Leningrad. The mad Nazi horde is on a rampage. Black fascist vultures are dropping bombs on our homes. Enemy shells are exploding in our beautiful streets and squares. The innocent blood of our children, our fathers and mothers, our wives and sisters is shed. The blood of our relatives, the blood of the Soviet people calls for revenge. Hitler's brutal methods are widely known throughout the world. He wants to sow panic in our ranks, he wants to intimidate us. He wants to break our spirit. Our word is to you today, to you, red warriors, who today, not sparing their lives, defend our hometown. For 23 years, not knowing we were tired, we fought and worked, creating a new life with blood and sweat. Our children do not know the terrible oppression that we, the old Obukhov, Putilov, Izhora, endured in the accursed tsarist time.

Our children, do they really know the Petersburg cellars where we huddled and grew up! Leningraders! After all, you have been behind the old Neva Zastava, you have been on the right bank of the Neva, where wastelands used to stretch. How many houses, how many schools, hospitals, clinics, how many clubs have been built here for you! All sanatoriums, all rest homes are at the disposal of the working people.

And did our city alone flourish? Thousands of such Soviet cities and sat down And the Nazi gang is coming to take away from us the joyful life won with such difficulty.

Can you give it away? Never! Do not be this. Fortitude, iron endurance, perseverance - these are the qualities that should manifest themselves with special force in each of us in these terrible days. Not a

shadow of sadness! We well know that the despicable, bleeding enemy is straining his last strength to break into our city. But our forces are great, and we are not alone, fighting friends and comrades. The whole country, all the people are with you, and they are coming to your aid. We, the

Obukhovites, participants in the glorious Obukhov defense, covered with stones hated armed enemy, and did not give up. In the days

of 1919, when Red Peter was defending himself from Yudenich's gangs, we Obukhovites never retreated. But then we received an eighth of bread, walked in bast shoes, many were armed with Berdans. But we boldly went on the attack against heavily armed

gangs of Yudenich and won.

Be also you, our dear friends and brothers, the same steadfast and strong. Here, in the city of Lenin, at our factories, we forge victory over our worst enemy. We do not leave the machines and workbenches for a minute, releasing ammunition and weapons for you. Hundreds of our Stakhanovites, such as Chirkov, Tugeev, Khomyakov, Izotov, Semyonova, Larionov, perform 3, 4, 5, and sometimes 8-10 norms per shift. They do not leave the workshop for several days, if only to fulfill the order of the front.

Beat the enemy mercilessly! He is strong in his arrogance. But the first strong blow makes the enemy take flight. Let's be united like never before. Be merciless to those who forget about their military duty in these harsh days. ... Those who with dignity

and honesty, not sparing their lives, defend our Leningrad are surrounded by great glory. The names of cowards and traitors will be covered with eternal shame. The valiant defenders of Leningrad are destroying the Nazi bandits every day. The enemy is running out of steam, and the hour is near when he will choke in his own blood. So strike harder than the enemy, dear comrades, fighting friends! Let no one falter before him, let everyone firmly and accurately direct his bayonet and bullet into the filthy enemy chest.

We, the old Petersburgers, who have more than once defended our city, our country, the revolution from enemies,

demand from you: NOT A STEP BACK! ONLY FORWARD, OUR RELATIVES! FOR LENINGRAD! FOR

OUR VICTORY! *G. Stryukov, 46 years of production experience, participant of the Obukhov defense. P. Kisel, 43 years of work experience, participant of the Obukhov defense, defense Petrograd from the bands of Yudenich, a participant in the Civil War.*

M. Nikolaev, 40 years of work experience, participant in the Obukhov defense, member of the first Council of Workers' Deputies. N.

Fedorov, 27 years of work experience, participant in the defense of Petrograd from gangs of Yudenich.

E. Izotova, Stakhanovka, engraver of the tool shop. And one more document testifying to the conditions in which the Leningrad gunsmiths had to work. This is the order of the director of the Bolshevik plant A.I. Zakharyin No. 49 of March 26, 1943 on the encouragement of workers who distinguished themselves in the elimination of the consequences of an enemy bombardment. It says in particular:

"During the bombardment by enemy aircraft, a number of factory workers showed exceptional self-control, composure and endurance while at their posts.

The patriots of our Motherland and the plant, an employee of shop No. 18, showed special stamina and endurance. Belyaeva D.A., commander of the medical platoon comrade. Emelyanova N.P. Tov. Belyaeva D.A., being wounded, despite her injury, did not lose heart, on the contrary, she pointed out to the units of the MPVO and the workers of the plant who came to the rescue where the victims were. Tov.

Emelyanova N.P., not paying attention to the ongoing bombing, quickly arrived at the lesion site with a unit and, by personal example, inspired the fighters of her unit to quickly provide assistance to the victims. In the spring of 1944, I arrived at the plant in order to get

acquainted with its condition on the spot and determine the necessary measures for the restoration and establishment of its full production. It is difficult to convey those feelings of bitterness and anger that crowded in my chest when I walked around the territory of the plant so familiar to me, but now unrecognizably disfigured by the war. I spoke with people who lived and worked here during the blockade, peered into their faces, saw calm confidence and firmness in their eyes. I left Leningrad a few days later with the feeling that such people could do anything.

The heroic Leningrad epic lasted nine hundred days. Compare: in just seven days, the vaunted defensive Northern Wall, which the Nazis had been building and strengthening over the past two years, was crushed, declaring it impregnable. Soviet

troops broke through the defenses of the Nazi Army Group North and defeated it, freeing the entire Leningrad and part of the Kalinin region.

At the same time, a strategic offensive was carried out on the Right-Bank Ukraine. During its preparation, great attention was paid to saturating the troops with tanks with a new 85-mm cannon and self-propelled artillery mounts. Relevant tasks were assigned to the people's commissariats of armaments, the tank industry, ammunition, the Main Artillery and Main Armored and Tank Directorates of the Red Army.

Approximately a month after the completion of field tests of the 85-mm tank gun, V.A. Malyshev, B.L. Vannikov, N.D. Yakovlev, Ya.N. Fedorenko and me. F.F. was already here. Petrov and V.G. Grabin. All of us participated in field tests of prototypes of guns, everyone was well aware of the

advantages and disadvantages of these samples revealed during the tests. The ZIS-S-53 cannon has actually already been completed. The preparation of the technological process in the workshops was completed, all the technical documentation was issued to the performers.

- In fact, the production of weapons has already begun, - reported the director of the plant A.S. Elyan. - A backlog of the main forgings, castings, billets has been created, the last assembly was completed and tested yesterday, the preparation of production lines is being completed. - How are

people? - In combat. We were here, while the gun was being fine-tuned, in all the workshops and in all areas we did a lot of work. Yes, Ivan Dmitrievich will tell you in more detail. "The

conversation about mastering the production of a new model took place in all party organizations," responded the party organizer of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks I.D. Linev. - The Communists assured that the plant will fulfill the new task of the State Defense Committee. And our word is strong, you know that, Dmitri Fyodorovich. So let's not let us down.

- I believe! The task is responsible. Any failures must be ruled out. I ask you to check the key areas again and not weaken your attention to them. In case of unforeseen complications, report to me immediately!

As always during visits to this plant, I settled in the assembly shop No. 8, in the amenity building on the second floor. This place was convenient because it was located next to the main production site, one might say, with its core. From here, the most convenient connections with the rest of the production links, and operational management were provided. The direct participation in the

preparation of mass production of the leaders of the tank industry and the ammunition industry, the artillery and armored services of the Red Army contributed to the rapid and radical solution of all organizational issues.

In early March, thirty-fours equipped with an 85-mm cannon entered the troops in an increasing stream. Just in those days, the magazine Planned Economy asked me to tell me about the work of the enterprises of the People's Commissariat for the production of weapons for the front. The material has been published. Here is what it said about one of the plants: "The staff of the plant worked selflessly, where the director

A.S. Yelyan... In difficult conditions, when the external cooperation of enterprises was greatly complicated, the plant managed to organize a closed cycle for the production of guns. The team created its own metallurgical base, which made it possible to abandon metal imported from afar, designed and built special machine-tool and tool shops, which provided the plant with the necessary equipment and tools.

The plant was the first to transfer the production of guns to the flow. The transition to mass production demanded the greatest effort from the team. The work was carried out on a wide front. The plant was reconstructed on the move, built new workshops and at the same time increased output. And the feat accomplished by his team consisted not only in

the fact that people sometimes didn't leave the workshops for two or three days, but that the team learned to work on schedule, without fever, to work in such a way that the process of creating a gun went smoothly, in a single rhythm. The plant overfulfilled the program from month to month"²⁸.

The growing supply of weapons to the front increased the firepower and striking power of our formations and units participating in the liberation of the Right-Bank Ukraine. Suffice it to say that the four Ukrainian Fronts and the Separate Primorskaya Army in just three months of 1944 received almost half of all the guns and mortars and three-quarters of the tanks that entered the active army. Having concentrated all the tank armies here, the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command ensured a twofold superiority over the enemy in tanks and self-propelled guns.

The spring offensive of the Red Army, like a flood, cleared a significant territory of the country from the Nazi invaders. The front moved to the west by 250–450 kilometers. The state border of the USSR was restored for 400 kilometers. The Red Army occupied an advantageous position for the deployment of new broad offensive operations. In battles with the enemy, new types of weapons confirmed their high quality. But there were also some

shortcomings in certain systems. They had to be eliminated already in the process of mass production. People's Commissariat workers constantly maintained close contact with the front, and representatives of the troops took part in technical meetings held by the People's Commissariat. This helped to respond more quickly to all the requirements and requests of the front.

On May 16, 1944, the commander of the troops of the 2nd Ukrainian Front, I.S. Konev sent in the name of I.V. Stalin a telegram in which he reported defects in 85-mm and 122-mm tank and self-propelled guns. On the

same day I.V. Stalin called me: "Comrade

Ustinov, a telegram has arrived from Konev. She touches you directly. Konev reports on the shortcomings of our tanks and self-propelled guns. Including weapons. Take the most vigorous measures to eliminate them. Is ten days enough for you? "Enough, Comrade Stalin," I

answered firmly. The fact is that we already knew

about most of the defects and worked on their elimination. In Konev's telegram, a copy of which we received, it was, in particular, about the separation of lifting and turning mechanisms at the place of their welding to the armor when an enemy projectile hit the turret, about cases of chipping of the head of the firing pin and a weak mainspring, about dead moves in the lifting mechanism, the inconvenience of the tray for loading the gun. "In ten days, report to the State Defense Committee on the elimination of shortcomings," said Stalin. - Appropriate instructions were given to Malyshev, Yakovlev and Fedorenko. Coordinate your work with them.

A team of specialists was sent to the front to clarify some details related to the specific conditions for the occurrence of breakdowns, the features of the operating mode and the combat use of weapons. At the same time, at the artillery factories, they accelerated work on improving the units and mechanisms that caused criticism.

On May 24, a joint protocol was submitted to the State Defense Committee, signed by the People's Commissar of the tank industry V.A. Malyshev, Commander of the Armored and Mechanized Forces of the Red Army, Marshal of the Armored Forces Ya.N. Fedorenko, head of the Main Artillery Directorate of the Red Army, Marshal of Artillery N.D. Yakovlev and me. An improved lifting mechanism for the 85-mm tank gun was created, the technical specifications for the manufacture and installation of the lifting and turning mechanisms of the gun and turret were revised, and the welding seams were strengthened. Became a reliable drummer. Subsequently, there were no complaints about all these systems.

²⁸ Planned economy. 1944. No. 3. S. 19.

In design bureaus and institutes, at the factories of the People's Commissariat, the proportion of advanced weapons development increased. In 1944, a whole series of work was carried out to create small arms chambered for the 1943 model of the year - an intermediate between rifle and pistol. In particular, S.G. Simonov, A.I. Sudayev, V.A. Degtyarev designed a carbine, machine gun and machine gun. At competitive trials, a light machine gun V.A. Degtyarev under such a cartridge showed better results than similar systems created by S.G. Simonov and A.I. Sudayev, and was adopted by the Red Army. This machine gun, which received the name RPD, successfully proved itself in a combat situation, deserving the high appreciation and love of front-line soldiers. In the

same year, designer Mikhail Timofeevich Kalashnikov began work on a fundamentally new assault rifle. As a tank commander, Kalashnikov took part in the battles. In the autumn of 1941, he was seriously wounded, and after the hospital he devoted himself entirely to design work, a craving for which he had manifested even before the war, while serving in a school for tank drivers.

It is to such people as M.T. Kalashnikov, first of all refers to the popular definition of talent: a nugget. At the final stage of the war, the designer worked with particular effort. But no matter how he hurried to give new weapons to the front, he managed to finish the work only after the Victory. The automatic small arms he created - a whole series of unified models with the same principle of operation and a single automation scheme - is rightfully considered the best in the world. And all these samples are distinguished by high reliability, efficiency, ease of use and excellent manufacturability. Essentially, M.T. Kalashnikov was several decades ahead of his time in his work. Now he is twice Hero of Socialist Labor, laureate of the Lenin and State Prizes of the USSR, continues to work in the difficult design field. Almost in the same period when M.T. Kalashnikov was on the verge of opening a new era in the design of small arms, S.V. Vladimirov created

a 14.5-mm heavy machine gun, which successfully passed all the tests and was put into serial production. This machine gun was once recognized as one of the best weapons of this type. In general, Soviet designers of automatic small arms were significantly ahead of the enemy both in terms of the novelty of technical solutions and the manufacturability of the samples they

created. This largely predetermined our superiority in production volumes. In connection with the saturation of the troops with automatic weapons in 1944, the production of small arms was reduced by 18 percent compared with the previous year. In 1945, the production of weapons continued to decline. Nevertheless, not only compensation for losses and satisfaction of the needs of the front was ensured, but also a constant replenishment of the reserve of small arms. The same was the picture in other types of weapons. And when, after the liberation of Right-Bank Ukraine, the Soviet troops in the south of the country were faced with the task of expelling the enemy from the Crimea, they received replenishment, the necessary military equipment,

weapons, and ammunition in the shortest possible time. Under their blows, the enemy fortifications in the northern part of the peninsula were hacked in four days. Pursuing the enemy, our troops reached Sevastopol. As a result of the assault, by the end of May 9, the city was cleared of the Nazis.

Soviet soldiers saw conflagrations and piles of ruins. In 1941-1942, Sevastopol withstood a 250-day siege and was abandoned only by order of the Supreme High Command. The Nazi invaders sought to wipe the city off the face of the earth. Almost all of it was destroyed, only a few buildings survived. But by the selfless labor of the Soviet people, Sevastopol was rebuilt and now lives and works for the good of our Motherland, worthily continues the heroic revolutionary, military and labor traditions.

In the summer of 1983, I came to Sevastopol to present the Order of the October Revolution to the city. Sevastopol was awarded this award for the revolutionary and military merits of the working people, their contribution to strengthening the economic and defense might of the country and in connection with the 200th anniversary of its founding. Surprisingly beautiful Sevastopol is a hero-city, a city-worker, a vivid symbol of the inflexible stamina, courage and bravery of the Soviet people ... Back in those

April days of 1944, when the Red Army troops were completing the defeat of the enemy in the Right-Bank Ukraine and proceeded to liberate the Crimea, a joint meeting was held Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks and the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command. It decided to conduct a powerful summer offensive in order to defeat the main forces of the Nazi army on the Soviet-German front and completely liberate our Motherland.

In early June, I.V. Stalin informed W. Churchill about this. "The general offensive of the Soviet troops," he wrote, "will be deployed in stages through the sequential introduction of armies into offensive operations. At the end of June and during July, offensive operations will turn into a general offensive of the Soviet troops. Letter to I.V. Stalin served as a new

confirmation of the loyalty of the USSR to its allied obligations. Soviet troops launched an offensive in accordance with Stalin's statement at the Tehran Conference at the end of 1943. As you know, at this conference the Soviet delegation had to stubbornly

seek firm commitments from Britain and the United States regarding the opening of a second front. In the "Military Decisions of the Tehran Conference" it was recorded that the American-British troops during May

1944 will land in France, and the offensive of the Soviet troops will prevent the transfer of German forces from the Eastern to the Western front.

The successes of the Red Army forced the ruling circles of England and the USA to abandon the tactics of delaying and delaying the opening of a second front in Europe. On June 6, 1944, it was finally created: American-British troops landed in northern France. This, of course, played a certain role during the war, but did not lead to a serious regrouping of the armed forces of Nazi Germany. As before, the Soviet-German front remained decisive. Here the Nazi command constantly kept more than two-thirds of all its forces and means in the hope of gaining time and splitting the anti-Hitler coalition. The Soviet troops buried these hopes with their active offensive operations. On June 23, the Belarusian operation began on a vast territory from

the Western Dvina to Pripyat and from the Dnieper to the Vistula. Four fronts took part in the operation, reinforced at the expense of the Stavka reserve by four combined arms and two tank armies, tank and mechanized corps, rifle, cavalry and aviation divisions. The possibilities of the Soviet military economy by this time were so great that it fully provided for all the needs of the army in military equipment and weapons. For comparison, I will say that the troops participating in the Belarusian operation had three times more artillery than in the battle on the Volga. In total, our grouping consisted of 2.4 million people, 36.4 thousand guns, 5.2 thousand tanks and self-propelled guns, 5.3 thousand aircraft. Every day

this grouping received 90-100 echelons with ammunition, fuel, food, and other materiel.

All this created reliable prerequisites for a successful operation. And success came. During the first six days of the offensive, our troops defeated 26

²⁹ Correspondence of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR with US Presidents and Prime Ministers Great Britain during the Great Patriotic War 1941–1945 M., 1976. T. 1. S. 267.

enemy divisions, and in early July they closed the encirclement around the enemy grouping, located east of Minsk.

A few days later, Muscovites witnessed an unusual "parade": about 60,000 Nazi soldiers and officers captured in the Minsk pocket, dejectedly wandered along the Garden Ring of the Soviet capital. For these fascist warriors, the war had already ended, it had ended shamefully ... Under the blows of the

Soviet troops, the Nazi army was demoralized more and more. And although the inertia of the huge war machine of the aggressor, once started and set in motion, did not allow it to stop, although the fear of retribution for monstrous crimes forced the Nazis to resist stubbornly and fiercely, this was the resistance of the doomed. And the fascist state, and the fascist army, and the fascist ideology were steadily and inevitably approaching their collapse ...

On August 17, breaking into the enemy defenses, our advanced units entered the territory of Nazi Germany. The war has come to the place where it was conceived through the efforts of international imperialism, from where it fell upon the peoples of the world with incalculable disasters.

Through the heroic efforts of the Red Army, partisans and underground fighters, home front workers, the German fascist invaders were expelled from Soviet soil.

Feat

Three years of the Great Patriotic War have passed. The Soviet people continued to bear on their shoulders the brunt of the struggle against fascism, exerting all their strength to hasten the final defeat of the enemy, to bring closer the hour that was supposed to be the hour of the natural and complete collapse of fascism, the hour of the Great Victory of the Land of the Soviets, and for the enslaved peoples of Europe - the long-awaited hour of complete liberation.

With the entry of Soviet troops into the territory of the countries of Europe occupied by the Nazis, their historical liberation mission, saving the fate of many peoples, and ultimately the whole world, began immediately. This mission flowed from the very nature of socialism, from the policy of the Soviet state, which from the first day of its existence proclaimed as its goal a just, democratic peace and equal cooperation between peoples. It was imbued with the ideas of freedom, social justice and humanism, and therefore the peoples of Europe saw in the Red Army their liberator from fascist slavery, from misanthropic ideology and morality. It was very difficult, this mission. Soviet soldiers had to fight through fire and death for more than one hundred

kilometers. They continued to fight the enemy with the same selfless heroism and courage as near Moscow and Leningrad, on the Volga and near Kursk, in Ukraine and Belarus. Fight for the freedom of the peoples of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Yugoslavia...

The patriotic feat of the Soviet people in the Great Patriotic War was, from its very beginning, deeply international in its essence. With the price of the lives of millions of their sons and daughters, at the cost of unheard-of sacrifices and hardships, the Soviet people saved not only themselves, but the whole world from the threat of fascist enslavement hanging over them. The Soviet people did a lot - despite the fact that the war required the utmost exertion of all forces and the mobilization of all resources, and to directly support the struggle of the peoples of other countries against fascism, in particular, to equip national military formations with the necessary weapons and equipment.

Back in 1943, the State Defense Committee created a special apparatus of the authorized representative of the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command for foreign formations on the territory of the USSR. He was faced with the task of assisting in the creation and training of foreign military formations and maintaining constant contact with them. spring

In 1944, the 1st Czechoslovak Army Corps, the 1st Polish Army, the 1st Romanian Volunteer Infantry Division named after Tudor Vladimirescu fought shoulder to shoulder with formations and units of the Red Army against the Nazi invaders. Another Romanian division was being formed from patriotic political emigrants and volunteer prisoners of war, a separate tank brigade and two aviation regiments for the National Liberation Army of Yugoslavia and other foreign formations and units. Their total number by the end of the war reached more than half a million people. All these formations subsequently played a big role in the formation and development of the armed forces of their states. And then, in the midst of a fierce battle with the Nazi invaders,

foreign formations and units created on the territory of our country were provided with the best weapons for that time, solid uniforms and the same food as in the Soviet troops. When the Red Army liberated the countries of Southeast and Central Europe, the governments of these countries turned to the USSR with a request for help in creating national liberation armies. They were donated a total of about 5.5 thousand guns of various calibers, more than 176 thousand machine guns, over half a million rifles and carbines, many other small arms and artillery weapons, tanks and aircraft. In addition, the USSR allocated significant funds, including weapons, for the anti-fascist resistance movement, the people's liberation struggle in the countries occupied by the Nazis.

Of course, all this required additional efforts from the Soviet people. But they worked in the name of helping class brothers, comrades in the struggle with a deep understanding of the need for such help. And this was a convincing manifestation of internationalism in action, it meant that in a short, in essence, post-October period, internationalist principles entered the flesh and blood of the Soviet people.

For millions and millions of our people, to be a patriot certainly meant to be an internationalist. Moreover, we must not forget that the war that befell the USSR with unprecedented acuteness posed the question before every Soviet person: whether or not to be a citizen of the Land of Soviets, whether or not to be this country itself, the socialist system, our way of life. And the Soviet people answered with their great patriotic and international feat: to be! This immortal feat, which continued from day to day throughout

the Great Patriotic War, will forever remain an exciting embodiment of the deeply conscious, zealous attitude of Soviet people to their patriotic and internationalist duty. Such an attitude is one of the original values of our socialist society, values that acquire ever-increasing significance over time. Socialist emulation played an important role in the education of people. In the summer and autumn of 1941, a patriotic movement arose at the defense factories of many cities for the fulfillment

of two, three or more norms (the movement of two hundred, three hundred), and in the spring of 1942, a movement of thousand people began.

During the war years, the name of a young Leningrad gunsmith, communist Vladimir Knyazev, was famous not only in our industry, but also in the country. A talented turner, he constantly performed four or five, and sometimes up to ten norms per shift. Here is how Knyazev himself spoke about his work in the factory

circulation: "I am a young man, a member of the Komsomol, and now a communist. Therefore, I cannot be a bad fighter in production and will never rest on my laurels. Until recently, I completed the task by 450-500 percent, but when the good news came from the front, my patriotic feeling told me that this was not enough, and I decided to check myself again - could I increase my output. On January 28, I got

on the night shift. It became clear to me that there are opportunities to increase production, and before I did not notice them. First, I increased

cutting speed more than twice, for which he replaced the cutters with harder ones. Things moved quickly. Then he put things in order in his measuring and working tools, prepared them immediately for the whole shift, which reduced the time for sharpening. Previously, the tool was lying on my nightstand on the side, in order to take it and measure the part, I had to take two steps, now I spread it right in front of me and take it almost without looking. All my attention is focused only on the details. Even the details I also moved closer to me and do not go after them, as before. This saves a lot of working hours.

It took a lot of time to change parts. It was necessary to remove the clamp, unscrew the part, then put the clamp back on, etc. It took 3-4 minutes. I got the idea to do without a collar at all, to fix the part with a special device. And what: the time to change parts was reduced to 30-40 seconds.

Thanks to such small events, I completed the task by 960 percent that day, and gave the same amount the next day. The successes of the

Red Army in defeating the Nazi invaders are so great that I want to mark them with something special, and I promise not to slow down." The fame of the

achievements of Vladimir Knyazev spread throughout the country. There was a song about him. And now, after some time, among the many letters addressed to Knyazev, news from Mordovia came to the plant. It was sent by Varvara Alekseevna Knyazeva, who lost the trail of her youngest son Volodya in the confusion of the first weeks and months of the war. And although, as she found out, the gunsmith Vladimir Knyazev was not her son, a correspondence began between them. The letters have been preserved and are now included in the fund of the factory museum. They are most directly related to the conversation about patriotism, about duty, about labor feat, and therefore I would like to quote at least small excerpts from these letters.

"Yesterday, Volodya's older brother, Kim, a lieutenant of the Red Army," wrote Varvara Alekseevna, "sent me a leaf from the book with 'The Song of Vladimir Knyazev.' My heart beat with joy! And suddenly it's my son! And the thought prompted me to write you a letter and find out the truth. Oh, how I wish it was my son Vladimir Alexandrovich Knyazev!

But whoever you are, you are the son of our Motherland, a Stakhanovist hero helping our glorious Red Army. Please accept my congratulations and wishes for even better work, even stronger love for our Motherland."

Vladimir Knyazev wrote a warm letter to Varvara Alekseevna in a filial way. It ended like this: "... I am not a hero, I am a simple Leningrad worker honestly working for the defense of our Motherland. Dear Varvara

Alekseevna, I assure you that I will not give up my pace of work, my machine still has a red flag for the championship.

There is nothing more joyful for me than to work for the Red Army, knowing that your work goes to the destruction of the German invaders and the liberation of our holy land, to the happiness of our mothers

and fathers. As well as throughout the country, socialist competition in enterprises and institutions of the People's Commissariat for Armaments acquired a large scale. Many of its new forms were born - the movement for combining professions, mastering new ones, the struggle for the best site, the best shift.

In the spring of 1942, when the reorganization of the national economy on a war footing was successfully completed and the industry stood firmly on a military footing, a qualitatively new stage of competition began, it received organizational formalization on a countrywide scale. A number of advanced labor collectives, in response to the May call of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, to intensify assistance to the front in every possible way, came up with an initiative - to start an All-Union socialist competition. The Politburo of the Central Committee of the party approved the initiative. The challenge Red Banners of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks and the State Defense Committee were established, and funds were allocated for awarding winners.

It was necessary, taking into account the already existing experience, to organize competition in the workplace, in brigades, workshops, factories, in the industry, to fully use this powerful lever to further increase the output and improve the quality of weapons.

Meetings of party committees, meetings of communists and all workers were held everywhere. The organization of the competition was based on the Leninist principles of openness, comparability of results, wide dissemination and mastering of the best experience, and bringing those who lag behind to the level of leaders. Already the first

month of the All-Union Socialist Competition showed that it helped to identify and put into action additional reserves for shortening the production cycle, primarily through better organization of labor, the use of rational technology, and the widespread introduction of automation and mechanization of production. The collectives of the factories of the People's Commissariat of Arms fulfilled their pre-May obligations with honor. The winners of the socialist competition were presented with the challenge Red Banners of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks and the State Defense Committee. As I write these lines, I remember a spacious assembly shop, a table covered with calico, and excited faces of gunsmiths. Solemn, exciting moments. I have to hand over the Red Banner of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks and the State Defense Committee to the staff of the plant. Shoulder to shoulder, elbow to elbow, there are gray-haired workers who had gone on a well-deserved rest, but the outbreak of war returned them to the machines, women who replaced husbands fighting at the front in the shops, plant personnel and the work shift are teenagers. It was their merged, selfless labor that won the Red Banner. It is common, one for all, and therefore a particularly expensive reward. Joy, pride, glory common to all...

During the war years, many advanced teams of the People's Commissariat of Armaments were awarded the challenge Red Banners of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks and the State Defense Committee. At a number of factories, these banners are left for eternal storage. They rightfully, like warriors in a single formation, stand next to the banners of enterprises on which orders shine - awards of the Motherland for steadfastness and courage, for selflessness and labor prowess, for a great

contribution to defeating the enemy, to achieving Victory in the Great Patriotic War. To use Lenin's words, competition really drew the majority of the working people into the arena of such work, where they could prove themselves and develop their abilities. Merging together, embodied in the concrete results of the work of collectives of enterprises, creativity, initiative, activity of each employee became the most important factor in the successful implementation of intense plans for the production of weapons. These plans, their overfulfillment, were both the starting point and the criterion for the effectiveness of socialist emulation.

Congratulating the staff of the Lenin plant on the successful completion of the program for the next month and calling for the further development of socialist competition, I reminded in my telegram: uniform work according to the established schedule and unconditional fulfillment of the plan for the production of spare parts of the general program and the program of the plant. In addition to the listed basic conditions, pay special attention to the daily fulfillment of the schedule and the implementation of the entire program of the established nomenclature, the implementation of the general plant plan for the entire nomenclature, the reduction in fuel

and electricity consumption, the saving of metal, the use of internal plant resources.

In the course of the war, in the process of accumulating work experience and organizing socialist emulation, new initiatives were also born. Their content reflected the increased possibilities of production. In May 1944, for example, the workers of one of the artillery factories appealed to other factories of our people's commissariat with a call to sharply increase labor productivity, to provide more weapons and military equipment in excess of the plan. I have been to this company many times. It was headed by an experienced and skillful organizer of production A.I. Bykhovsky. With the beginning of the war, the plant mastered the production of heavy artillery systems and successfully coped with planned tasks.

After reading the socialist obligations assumed by the collective, I called the party organizer

The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks at the A.M. Sendyukov:

- Alexei Matveyevich, your initiative deserves support ... You have taken serious obligations - in a month and a half to release artillery weapons in excess of the plan to equip 12 regiments. Can you handle it? After all, there is a special demand from you as from the initiators.

"Our obligations are carefully calculated. They are discussed in detail in workshops and departments. People know what they are doing. So our word is strong, - answered Sendyukov. A sedate man, outwardly even seemingly slow, even now he spoke unhurriedly, and perhaps for this very reason he was especially convincing and weighty.

The initiative of the plant was picked up in the industry. A.S. Yelyan, for example, reported to me that his factory undertook to produce divisional guns for 10 regiments, tank guns for 3 tank brigades, in excess of the plan within a month and a half. Other factories also made high commitments.

Socialist competition took on a variety of forms. For example, the movement of high-speed workers has become widespread. Being at the plant, led by A.S. Elyan, I met one of the founders of this movement, turner Mikhail Gudkov. - How did it happen that you started using high-speed methods of work? I asked

him.

- We have three turners instead of six turners in the area of finish turning of trunks. Here I decided to try to work for three. - Did it happen

right away? - Yes, you

can say, almost immediately, although I was shy at first: what if I lock up the trunks?

Still, the cutting speed has increased significantly. But at work he calmed down, and things went well. - So, they say it right: the eyes are afraid, but the hands are doing?

"That's right," Gudkov smiled. - Hands, of course, are important, but only the head is still the main one. And the cutter needs to be sharpened in a special way, and the order of operations should be thought out so as not to fuss to no avail. Yes, and you need to understand your machine well, because it is like a living one, it has its own soul. How you treat him is how he treats you...

- Do you like your machine?

- How can you not love him? After all, we are working together. I saw how Gudkov worked. The impression was that he and the machine were one unit.

It must be said that an honorable and difficult task fell on the speedmen. They constituted a kind of striking force of the factory teams. They were entrusted with especially important and urgent tasks. They were the first to apply advanced forms of collective high-performance work.

A special - not only production, but also educational - role in the competition was played by front-line brigades. Even in the first year of the war, a struggle began among the Komsomol youth teams for conferring the title of "Front Brigade". She walked under the slogan "In work, as in battle." The title of front-line was assigned to those brigades that systematically completed shift tasks by at least 150-200 percent, achieved high qualifications of all members of the brigade, and were a model in production and in everyday life.

The initiator of the movement in our industry was the team of M.F. Popov. By the end of 1944, almost 10,000 Komsomol youth brigades were already participating in this movement at the factories of the People's Commissariat for Armaments. In total, by this time, about 145 thousand Komsomol youth brigades, numbering 400 thousand boys and girls, competed in industry and transport. The title of front-line soldiers was won by about 52 thousand brigades. This honorary title was awarded to the brigades of Vil Dubovoy, Vladimir Skotnikov, Nikolai Trutnev, Mikhail Shokhi, Yevgeny Lebedinsky, Alexander Pdrev, whom I have already talked about, and many, many other Komsomol youth groups of weapons factories. V. Dubova spoke about how the front-line brigades worked at the All-Union gathering of their leaders: "Our response to the victories of front-line soldiers

there were several production norms per shift ... Vladimir Romanenko gave output up to 700 percent. The brigade as a whole gave at least 4 tasks daily, and after the shift we went to the assembly shop for the manufacture of above-planned products, which were sent as a Komsomol gift to the front ... It used to be that Vera Gubina, Alexei Urban, Liza Kopylova, our the factory leader Kostya Kovalenko, Valya Karpova, Katya Khmelnitskaya ... " Front-line brigades were also shown at other enterprises of the people's commissariat. For example, in the

Starikova brigade on the night of December 5, 1943, the revolvers E. Karchapolova, E. Gutova and V. Antipova blocked the shift rate by more than 10 times. The foreman and Komsgruporg Starikova provided great help to the girls. She did not allow machine downtime, on time, without delay, made adjustments. And there are many such examples. Competing for the best performance indicators, members of the front-line brigades continuously improved their skills and

mastered two or three specialties. This made it possible to release a significant number of workers, strengthen narrow areas and increase output. An active, effective form of socialist emulation was front watch, weeks, decades. Thousands of Stakhanovite workers stood on them and carried them with honor. Among the archival documents, I came

across an interesting report from this point of view for 1944 of the trade union committee of the plant, where the director was F.K. Chebotarev. In it, in particular,

notes:

"... In the process of organizing socialist competition at the plant, Stakhanov decades and front-line shifts were held, which caused an even greater production upsurge and new production successes of the plant staff. With a special production upsurge, the organization of front-line decades took place in May, June, October - in honor of the 185th anniversary of the plant; front-line two-decade period - in November, dedicated to the Day of Artillery, when the plant staff, along with the Stakhanov production work, also did an enormous job of bringing machine tools, workplaces of workshops and the entire vast territory of the plant into a festive look. During the tense days of front-line decades, the entire team was mobilized to fight for the schedule, for the early implementation of the production program.

At the initiative of the Stakhanovite blacksmiths of shop No. 4, on May 20, the front-line decade of metallurgists began, then this initiative was picked up by the mechanical and auxiliary shops of the plant. Thus, front-line decades were held throughout the plant throughout May and June. The success of the front-line

decades was ensured by a large preparatory work in the shops.

The front-line decades were marked by remarkable production achievements of the plant staff.

On May 31, on the day of his 40th anniversary of production activity, the noble blacksmith of the plant, Vasily Petrovich Golovaty, together with his team, set an outstanding record for pulling monoblocks, completing a shift task by 1538 percent. The best milling machine operator of the plant, a member of the plenum of the plant committee, Walter, when processing a part on 02-16, set a record - 1100 percent of the norm. The toolmaker

Linkov proposed a new method for making the "Asterisk" stamp, thanks to which he achieved an outstanding record by completing a shift task by 4200 percent. Tebenkov, the foreman of the youth brigade, set a

record - 1200 percent - during the metalworking of parts. The foreman of the youth brigade Charikov in July, when

processing parts 08-2, completed 1010 percent of the norm in honor of the 26th anniversary of the Red Army. On February 19, 1944, on a complex part, he worked out 1050 percent and a new record, at 1215 percent, according to

A36-3 dedicated to the 27th anniversary of the Great October Revolution..."³⁰

The production of weapons was steadily developing and growing. Together with him, people grew up, matured professionally and morally. And this, perhaps, was no less important, because the workers who had gone to the front with experience were mostly replaced by young people. Suffice it to say that in 1945 it accounted for almost half of the total number of industrial workers. And it was necessary not only to help young workers master their specialty, not only to include them in the production process, but also to educate in them the qualities of a Soviet worker, the qualities of a working person - honesty, decency, dedication, discipline. New workers who first came to the plant met comradely support in the shops. A huge, invaluable role in their education was played by

cadre gunsmiths who received revolutionary and labor hardening back in the days of October, during the struggle against the White Guards and foreign interventionists, during the years of the country's industrialization, the first five-year plans. During the war, they actually formed the backbone of labor collectives, set the tone for all their production activities.

Veteran workers. Simple, modest people, they cherished the honor of working, they lived in production, they perceived the elimination of malfunctions and omissions as a personal and urgent concern, they approached with interest everything that could serve to increase output, achieve common success.

They were regular gunsmiths. They, like the older generation of engineering and technical workers, production managers, designers, scientists in general, had a huge impact on young people. Their word carried great weight. Their praise was perceived by young workers as a very expensive reward, which was not so easy to earn, and their condemnation was worse than any other administrative penalty.

Gunsmiths... I can't think and talk about them without deep emotion - people who, first of all, have the merit of creating and producing the required number of first-class weapons in the Great Patriotic War. They are associated with my ideas about true craftsmanship, which, like the legendary Lefty, is akin to high art, about working honor, which is indispensable and is the best guarantee against hack work, marriage, greed and any kind of mismanagement, about a genuine proletarian culture that does not accept consumerism. and above all puts the ideals of liberated labor, eternal values - goodness, justice, humanism, commitment to the cause of peace and progress. Gunsmiths... Perhaps I perceived this word and everything that stands behind it in a special

way, because my youth is inseparable from gunsmiths, from their labors, searches, worries, what can I say - my whole life. And of course, to a large extent because I went through the Great Patriotic War with them. Gunsmiths... My dear comrades, comrades-in-arms and friends, everyone with whom I met more than once on my constant trips to factories and training grounds, with whom I worked shoulder to shoulder for four long years of the war, and for many years afterwards, after the Victory - all of you infinitely dear to my heart! It just so happened that in the annals, first of all, the names of those who led the teams, supervised the work, who were

responsible for the results of the work of tens, hundreds, thousands, and often many thousands of people, are recorded. It's probably fair. But we must never forget that initially any results, no matter how significant they may be, are created, collected bit by bit with the hands, mind, heart of ordinary workers, those who cook steel, give forgings, grind a part, lay lines on a design drawing board, pore over analyzes in the laboratory. If it were possible, I would call them all by name - real heroes who, day after day, often malnourished and sleep deprived, in

³⁰ Central State Administration of the Udmurt ASSR. F. 785. Op. 5. D. 3. L. 7-9.

heat and cold, in conditions of an acute shortage of raw materials and materials, gave the front a weapon that the Soviet people rightfully called the weapon of Victory.

Next to the regular gunsmiths, the young workers rose at the factories during the war years and became flush, shoulder to shoulder with them. Teenagers, boys and girls adopted a lot from their older comrades. The main thing is that they learned to respect their working honor and the honor of the team, they learned not to give in to difficulties, to work conscientiously.

Here is just one of them - a young mechanic of an artillery factory, Komsomol member Sergei Uvarov. Arriving at the factory, he mastered many working professions: if necessary, he stood at the lathe, turned into a cutter, a bricklayer, a plumber, in a word, he did any work necessary for production. Somehow, in one of the workshops, there was a threat of a

delay in the organization of work on assembling an important assembly of a new type of weapon. Complex tools and special equipment were required, but the plant did not have either. A deadlock has been created. As always, in search of a way out, designers, engineers, shop managers turned to the workers for advice and help. Sergei Uvarov proposed to assemble the knot according to the method invented by him and his comrades Bogdanov and Ulyanov. Technologists and craftsmen joined in, checked, weighed everything together and got down to business. The skill of young locksmiths, their ingenuity and initiative ensured success. Three friends did not leave the workshop for days until they finished the job. The node was assembled in 84 hours instead of 15-20 days spent on this operation before the war. This is what it meant to combine youthful enthusiasm, enthusiasm, creativity and initiative with outstanding professional skills.

Of course, the process of becoming young workers, their maturation was not always smooth, it required constant attention and care from the elders. This was especially true for teenagers. Varvara Vasilievna Demyanova

worked in the iron structures shop at the Bolshevik plant. And although the years were taking their toll, she was very tired, but she overfulfilled the norm every day. Otherwise, she, a worker with a long production experience, a member of the party, simply could not. Moreover, young workers, teenagers, worked nearby, they especially need a good example. Of course, Varvara Vasilievna had enough worries about the house. But that, probably, is the strength of a real person, that even in the most difficult conditions, not personal, but public remains in the foreground ... Varvara Vasilievna began to notice that the

students of the vocational school Misha Shumilin and Vanya Kozhankov, who worked in the workshop, somehow wilted, go dirty, as if indifferent to everything. Yes, and they began to do their job somehow. Varvara Vasilievna became worried. I consulted with the foreman of electricians Mitrofanov, also a communist. We agreed that he would take patronage over the artisans. I talked to the guys once or twice. And I realized that the boys would disappear, they would not rise without maternal warmth and care. I decided to take them to my house, to replace their mother. She raised seven children, she reasoned, put them on their feet. Four of them are adopted sons, but they are the same relatives as those whom she gave birth to and nursed with her milk. Three are already fighting at the front, beating the enemy. So really two more will not raise?

Not immediately, but the guys agreed to move to Varvara Vasilievna. They lived as one family, friendly, strong. The guys got up, became good workers. Misha, who caused Varvara Vasilyevna a lot of trouble - the boy was in poor health, often ill - soon joined the Komsomol. Together with her new children, Varvara Vasilievna was looking for their relatives. Kozhankov soon found relatives in the Smolensk region, his father, a front-line soldier, sent a message. But Mishin's family could not be found. But both of them, like their former adopted sons, considered Varvara Vasilievna their mother, tried to live and work so that she would not have to blush for them ... Yes, the war, as it were, highlighted many wonderful facets in the guise of a Soviet

person, revealed the deep layers of his character, gave a new - active, effective - sound

his patriotism.

One of the clearest examples of this is the unprecedented rise in innovation and invention in the country. The subordination of all the thoughts and aspirations of people to the common interests of defending the Fatherland, ensuring the speedy defeat of the hated enemy has turned the conscious creativity of workers into an active factor in increasing the production of weapons and improving their quality.

I remember many facts of rationalization and invention of gunsmiths. At one of the plants, senior technologist A.I. Gazin developed a new technology, thanks to which it became possible to make one of the important parts, previously made from rolled metal, by stamping. Machining of the workpiece was then reduced from 3 hours to 34 minutes. Locksmith Litovkin suggested using a copier-conductor for processing the part, thanks to which it became possible to process three parts in an hour instead of one. Within only two months, six rationalization proposals were made by the milling foreman Grigoriev. Their introduction dramatically increased labor productivity. Senior engineer Kozlov made three proposals, the implementation of which not only increased production, but also gave serious savings. By the way, the strictest austerity regime was an immutable law of wartime. Therefore, there was a constant persistent search not only for ways to work more productively, but also for sources of saving raw materials and materials. I recall the

story of the secretary of the party committee of the Bolshevik plant about how two furnaces were redone in the thermal section of the tool shop. Senior master I.I. Levitsky, fireman M.M. Semenov, his successor N.A. Kokarev, thermal specialists A.Ya. Bobrin and M.N. Kuzin figured that if the

furnaces were improved, it would be possible to achieve almost double savings on fuel oil, which was extremely scarce at that time. The game was definitely worth the candle. But who will take on this task? After all, it was required to perform a considerable amount of furnace, welding, and plumbing work. Inviting specialists from other workshops seems out of hand, they have enough worries of their own. "Let's try it ourselves, on our own," suggested Kokarev. Everyone agreed with the proposal.

The next day, highly skilled thermists-firers turned into laborers, stove-makers, mechanics, and welders. They did everything themselves: they brought auxiliary materials, laid out bricks in a line, brought air pipes from the fan to the furnaces. Work was in full swing. And finally it's all over. We need to turn on the oven. What to say, the moment

responsible. They worked - they had no doubts, but then it became somehow scary.

At 5:00 p.m. the stove was turned on. At 7 o'clock the temperature in it reached the norm - 950 degrees. - In two

hours the stove was raised! Semyonov was surprised. Yes, and there was something. It used to take seven to eight hours to warm up.

At 8 pm, the second furnace was launched, which should operate at a temperature of 1300 °C. This furnace worried the firemen even more. At midnight, the temperature in the oven reached the set point. The furnace was heated up in four hours, while previously it took 40-48 hours. And this is with half the fuel consumption than before!

And one more fact from Bolshevik. In the forge shop, the heating furnace of the Banning hammer worked for many years. Her hearth was very worn out - literally every week it failed. For repairs, 200 pieces of refractory bricks were required each time. Repairs were carried out by several stove-makers and helpers. Needless to say, how expensive it was in the conditions of an acute shortage of materials, time and labor! And here is the engineer of the department of the chief metallurgist A.N. Nesterov set out to increase the duration of the furnace. After a persistent search and a series of experiments, he proposed laying out the hearth not with dinas, but with magnesite and chromo-magnesite bricks.

This gave excellent results. Despite the frequent shutdowns of the furnace due to interruptions in the supply of steam associated with fascist shelling and bombing, which caused sharp

temperature fluctuations and adversely affected the brick, the hearth of the furnace, even after a whole month of work, was in excellent condition. The heating of the workpieces has improved a lot. If before that, the first day after the repair of the furnace usually went to warm up the new masonry, then after the alteration of the hearth, the metal warmed up well already in the first hours. In addition, when the savings were calculated, it turned out that it was a significant amount.

Recalling this fact, I want to emphasize one, so to speak, nuance. For the proposal made by Nesterov and implemented in production, he was awarded. So, he gave his entire award to the construction of combat aircraft. Significant! This is what millions of Soviet people did during the war years. These were organic, everyday, in that difficult time for the country, as if taken for granted, manifestations of patriotism - not in words, but in deeds. And this made such manifestations especially weighty, especially

significant.

Already at the very beginning of the war, the movement for the creation of the Defense Fund assumed a truly nationwide character. All the peoples of the Soviet Union, all the working people, took part in this movement. Workers donated one-day earnings to the Fund every month, collective farmers sowed overplanned "hectares of defense", Komsomol members and youth organized Sundays, pioneers and schoolchildren collected scrap metal. The Defense Fund received money, loan bonds, valuables, warm clothes, food. The scope of the patriotic movement to raise funds for the Red Army Fund was just as popular.

During the war years, several thousand artillery pieces and tanks, more than 2.5 thousand combat aircraft, and many other military equipment and weapons were manufactured and transferred to the troops with funds voluntarily contributed by Soviet people to the Defense Fund and the Red Army Fund. 15 percent of all military spending was covered by income from

Government military loans. More than 5.5 million Soviet people became donors.

Every Soviet person gave everything he had for the sake of the Victory, he gave it not for the sake of glory, not for the sake of any benefits, but for the sake of the freedom and independence of his native country. How much one must love her, how deeply one must be aware of one's responsibility for protecting her, in order not only to endure the immense stress of four years of work, to endure unheard-of hardships and hardships of war, but also to put one's labor ruble, one's blood, one's life on the altar of Victory! Such love originating in the very depths of the

heart gives a person truly heroic strength. 16 artillery batteries were built on the funds collected at the initiative of the youth of the Perm region. The guns were manufactured at the factory of A.I. Bykhovsky. Everyone who participated in the implementation of this honorable order worked with great enthusiasm. For eight days, for example, the youth brigade of L. Sicilitsin did not leave the workshop. Every day she completed the task by 300 percent, and the foreman himself gave five norms. Other brigades also showed high performance. The plant has successfully completed the task. Sixteen super-planned batteries were transferred to the troops of the North-Western Front. And a month earlier, at the beginning of September 1942, at a plant led by A.P. front Zolotarev, sending an anti-tank artillery battalion named after the Komsomol of Udmurtia. The Komsomol members of the plant

came up with the initiative to create such a division. We supported this initiative. E.A., chief engineer of the was appointed chairman of the division headquarters. Gulyants is a Komsomol-style on plant, energetic, combative person. Out of school hours, beyond all plans, the Komsomol members of the republic in two months produced everything necessary to equip the division - weapons, uniforms, equipment. The Komsomol of Udmurtia sent its best representatives to recruit it. The division, after appropriate training, was sent to the front.

About how he fought with the enemy, they told the letters of the fighters and commanders of the division to the Komsomol and youth of the republic. Such letters came to Udmurtia regularly, and

the gunsmiths responded warmly to them. In a letter dated April 26, 1944, the front-line soldiers wrote:

"Dear comrades!

Komsomol members,

the youth of our division send you their warm front-line greetings. Together with the entire Red Army, our Komsomol members are successfully crushing the Nazi invaders who encroached on the honor and freedom of our Motherland. With battles, we traveled over 700 km, destroying the enemy and his equipment. Dozens of enemy tanks, cannons and vehicles blazed from well-aimed shots from fighters and artillerymen. The enemy is paying with the bones of his soldiers and officers for the grief and torment inflicted on the freedom-loving peoples of the Soviet Union. In fierce battles and difficult campaigns, we multiply the glorious

fighting traditions of the Lenin Komsomol. Courageous, brave warriors have grown up in our ranks, awarded high government awards for their exploits. We are especially proud of the courage and bravery of the Komsomol Fighter Division, which bears the title of Komsomol of Udmurtia with honor and dignity. Until recently, heated battles for the ancient Ukrainian city of Dubno died down. The enemy resisted fiercely. In these battles,

fighters especially distinguished themselves, where the commander was Senior Lieutenant Bowl. On their site, they destroyed 4 firing points, suppressed 2 and were the first to break into the city. In the battles for the city of Krasnoarmeysk, fighters captured two enemy guns, of which they are now successfully destroying the enemy. Calculation of goods Gavrilov already knocked out an enemy tank from one of these guns. The calculation of the Komsomol Comrade. Saveliev knocked out 2 tanks (of which one was a Tiger) and 2 armored personnel carriers. There are many facts of courage and heroism. Heroes are born in every battle, especially among Komsomol members. In combat

life, our Komsomol members show themselves to be true leaders of the youth. That is why young people have such a strong attraction to the ranks of the Lenin Komsomol. Only during the fighting in the area of the city of Dubno from March 18 to March 22, 1944, more than 25 Komsomol members of our organization were awarded for courage and bravery. Admitted to the Komsomol about 100 people, 40 best members of the Komsomol became candidates for membership in the CPSU (b). More than 20 Komsomol members have been awarded in the division you created. For one of the skilfully conducted battles, the PTR company was almost completely presented by the command for a government award.

We thank you endlessly, dear comrades, for your daily help and care for your division, which we are proud of all the time. Your people, who came to the division as replenishment, are valiant Russian soldiers, for whom the honor of a soldier is above all. We have seen them in battle more than once and made sure of this. We also warmly thank you for the selfless work of Stakhanov in the rear to provide our valiant Red Army with advanced equipment. We assure you, dear comrades, that we will continue with the same strength and courage

smash the enemy until it is completely

exterminated. We are and will continue to beat the hated Nazi occupiers. Convey

our warm greetings to your best Stakhanovites, who are forging victory over the enemy deep in the rear. We appeal to you to

work with even greater energy and selflessness in your factories, to expand socialist emulation.

Together we will hasten the victory over the hated enemy.

On behalf of the division, the letter was signed

by: *Komsomol organizer of the guard regiment ml. lieutenant Panzhyansky Komsomol organization of the regiment senior lieutenant Pestretsov Komsomol foreman Grishin Komsomol machine gunner Sergeant Petin Assistant to the head of the political department of the Komsomol division captain Podbeltsev "31.*

I also remember such an episode connected with the collection of funds for the construction of military equipment. Once the director of the plant A.S. called me. Kotlyar. It should be noted that this plant has repeatedly won the championship in the competition of enterprises of the People's Commissariat of Arms and the challenge Red Banner of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks and the State Defense Committee. Reporting on the implementation of the plan, the director said:

- We have a meeting of young workers in the region. Before its opening, the Komsomol committee of our plant made a proposal to buy a combat aircraft during the days of the rally and send it to the front.

- Well, it's a good thing. Convey my gratitude to the Komsomol members of the plant.

With great enthusiasm, the teams of our Ural factories participated in the formation of a volunteer tank corps. Within three weeks, all the equipment and weapons for the corps, ammunition, equipment, uniforms were made. Volunteers were much more than required.

On the day of seeing off the corps to the front, the workers of the Urals turned to the tankers with parting word:

"Sons of the Urals! Warriors are our favorite! We smelted steel with our own hands, built the world's best combat vehicles from it, prepared military equipment and equipment, fully paid for the entire material part of the tank corps from our labor savings, and proudly brought this patriotic gift to the Motherland. And we, escorting you to the battlefield, firmly press you to our ardent hearts.

The corps adequately fought the enemy, with battles reached Prague. In the capital of fraternal Czechoslovakia, a tank is forever installed on a pedestal, which fought as part of the Ural Volunteer Corps. In the nationwide concern for equipping the Red Army with everything necessary, in the voluntary contribution of funds to the Defense Fund, in the collection of warm clothes and other collective and individual gifts for soldiers, in powerful moral support, the inextricable connection between the people and the army, the monolithic unity of the front and rear were manifested. .

Deep love, exceptional warmth permeated the letters, which were delivered by tens and hundreds of thousands daily during the war years by field mail to the front. Among them are many addressed not to father, son, husband, brother, but simply to soldiers, defenders of the Motherland. And letters from fighters, commanders, and entire military teams filled with heartfelt gratitude went to the rear from the front. Here is what, for example, they wrote in the spring of 1943 to their bosses - the staff of one of the Ural weapons factories, Red Army soldiers, commanders and political workers of the 112th separate rifle brigade: "Dear comrades! We, Red Army soldiers, commanders and political

workers of the 112th

separate rifle brigade, send you, our combat chiefs, warm front-line greetings and congratulations on the 25th anniversary of the heroic Red Army!

We meet this significant date at a decisive moment in the Patriotic War of the Soviet people against the Nazi invaders. On the day of the 25th anniversary of its existence, the Red Army received a combat order from the Supreme Commander Comrade. Stalin. We swear to you to fulfill it courageously, steadfastly and bravely.

We are constantly improving and will continue to improve combat skills, strengthen discipline, order and organization. We undertake to strengthen our blows against the bloodthirsty enemy who has violated our peaceful socialist life. For the torment of the Soviet people, for the tears and blood of our mothers, our children, for the tormented Soviet land, for our destroyed cities and villages, we will avenge in full. Our fighters and commanders have

learned to mercilessly beat the fascist reptiles. The heroic deeds of the machine gunner comrade. Chirkunov, who exterminated 150 Nazis in one battle, and art. lieutenant comrade. Umarov, who, being twice wounded, with a broken arm, led his company in a counterattack and put to flight superior enemy forces, will go down in history not only of our unit, but of the entire Red Army.

Our snipers daily increase their number of Hitler's thugs killed by them. Comrade Sergeant Ishkhametov killed 165 Germans, Alimbabaev - 121, comrade. Atabaev - 104, Illarionov - 69, Petrov - 54, Adashev - 52, Bessonov - 42. Being on the defensive, we did not give and do not give the enemy peace for a minute. The enemy already knows what active defense of our unit means. Our fighters go on the offensive, not knowing fear, skillfully combining crushing fire with rapid movement. We proudly carry the Battle Banner handed by you forward - to the West³². "Immortal Russian valor! You are with us, you are a heroic

sword and a shield! Let our banner pierced by bullets victoriously over the battle make noise. We have known the joy of military victories in difficult and

fierce battles. Now, at the decisive moment of the Great Patriotic War, inspired by the order ... and your care, we will do everything to accelerate the final victory over the hated enemy.

Strengthen your organization, order and discipline in the rear, mobilize all reserves to help the front. We will not let go of the weapon made by you until the complete and final victory over the most predatory and cunning enemy - Hitlerism. Thank you for your constant attention and

care! Thanks for gifts. In response, we promise to present you with a military gift

soon - our successes and victories in the upcoming battles with the fascist evil spirits. Long live the unity of the front and rear!"³³ Delegations of republics,

regions, and enterprises traveled to the front,

and delegations of front-line soldiers visited home front workers as a visible manifestation of the strong ties between the people and the army. Truly, the front and the rear, at the call of the Party, have closed into one fist that smashes the enemy!

The army that fought against the Nazi invaders was an integral part of the struggling Soviet people. And as part of the whole, she lived with the same thoughts and aspirations, the same anxieties and concerns as all working people, she defended the interests of our entire people.

We often and, as a rule, without thinking now about the deep meaning of these words, speak of the Soviet people as a new historical community. Never and nowhere before in the history of mankind has there been anything like it! It has never happened that all classes and social groups, all nations and nationalities aspired to common goals, lived by common interests and ideals, that people without distinction of their origin and nationality were bound by bonds of spiritual kinship, stronger than which, as the Great Patriotic War showed, there is nothing in the world.

At the time of the severe military trials that befell the Soviet country, the formation of the Soviet people as a fundamentally new social and international community, which began in October, accelerated many times over. At the same time, the patriotic feeling of belonging to a single socialist Motherland finally crystallized. This is a bright and strong feeling of people who for the first time in history have become the masters of their country, who have come to know the great happiness of liberated labor. It contains a life-giving source of unbending steadfastness, selflessness, the will to victory of the Soviet people, who became the main, immortal hero of the Great Patriotic War.

Heart of the people

No matter how intense the rhythm of the work of the People's Commissariat for Armaments, factories, institutes, design bureaus, and more broadly - our military economy, the whole country, on everything

³² This banner was established by decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Udmurt ASSR on April 1, 1942.

³³ Party archive of the Udmurt regional committee of the CPSU. F. 352. Op. 3. D. 298. L. 98.

throughout the war, he remained businesslike, even calm, however paradoxical it may sound. I mean the internal state that determines the deeds and actions of people, the line of their behavior. It is precisely this condition, imbued with calm confidence in the rightness of our cause, in our inevitable victory over the enemy, that seems to me to be one of the most remarkable features of the way of life and work of Soviet people during the war.

For all of us, for all the people, the Central Committee of the Party was the embodiment of such confidence. Here the mind and will of the party accumulated, its policy was formed. Powerful impulses of revolutionary energy constantly emanated from here. Reaching the most remote corners of the country, they mobilized millions of people, inspired them to selfless labor and feat of arms.

Even the few episodes that I have told about allow us to imagine how the highest bodies of leadership of the party and the state worked during the war years. I must emphasize that even in the most difficult, critical days of the war, the workers of the Central Committee apparatus were distinguished by endurance, firmness, purposefulness, and a deep knowledge of the situation. Frankly, sometimes I was amazed at their willingness to listen, to discuss the problem, to weigh the pros and cons again and again before making a decision or preparing the final version of the proposal for inclusion in an order or directive. And this is with a constant acute shortage of time! Just as the Central

Committee of the Party was constantly at the center of the life of the country, the activities of the people and the army, so the Party organizations were at the center of the life of labor collectives, socialist emulation, combat, organizational, political and mass propaganda work. They rallied and inspired people, increased their creative activity, acted as initiators of many wonderful deeds. The personal example of the communists had an enormous mobilizing and educational effect.

The war demanded a deepening of the connection between the whole matter of educating people with specific production tasks, put on the agenda an active search for new, more dynamic, operational, effective forms. And these tasks were successfully solved by the party organizations. The political education of the communists was organized at the enterprises. Lectures, reports, discussions on topical issues were regularly held in workshops, brigades, departments. As a rule, all of them concerned the practical tasks of the team. A particularly important role belonged to agitators, who supported people with words, attention, participation, instilled vigor in them, and helped to overcome difficulties.

Their restless but interesting work turned many agitators into experienced leaders of the masses. Such an agitator was Fedor Kuznetsov, a grinder in the tool shop of an artillery factory. He worked on the machine, constantly overfulfilled the norm. He read a lot, stealing time from sleep for this. Moreover, he read not only newspapers, magazines, but also found time for fiction. In stock he always had fresh news, and interesting thoughts, and exciting questions for discussion. He considered it necessary to share the main of what he had read and learned with his comrades. He invariably found a topic of the day, a place and a time to talk with the workers. At lunchtime, Kuznetsov usually read newspapers aloud, commenting on reports, never avoiding difficult and sensitive issues. Then he moved on to a conversation about the pressing affairs of the shop. Knowing people well, their moods and concerns, he knew how to find his own key to everyone, as they say, to talk heart to heart. Once, during enemy shelling, the wife and child of the grinder Alexander Grigoryevich Smirnov were killed. The worker took the loss hard. Kuznetsov, learning about what had happened, came to him.

- Why are you, Alexander Grigoryevich, completely lowered your hands? So grief can not be mastered. Angrily brushing away a tear, Smirnov admitted: "You see, Fedya, I can't find a place for myself. Everything in my chest froze. - You need to pay off, Alexander Grigoryevich, with the fascist. - How can I deal with him? They don't let you go to the front... - How do you say? What about work? It's no worse than if you're going to wield a bayonet

Especially considering your qualifications. You know how much the front needs our products now. There

was a long conversation between the agitator and the worker. The next day, Smirnov went to the shop committee of the trade union and announced that he was on a combat watch. A few minutes later, through a chalk newspaper, the whole shop learned about it. During the shift, Smirnov overfulfilled the task four and a half times. The next day, he consolidated his success, and then increased output even more. Thus the word of the agitator, echoing in the heart of man, melted in case.

About a week later, Kuznetsov's comrade at work, V.V. Stepanov told him that he had received a letter from his wife, who had been evacuated to the Krasnodar Territory. She wrote that, along with many other Soviet people, the Nazis were going to shoot her and the children, and only the arrival of the Red Army saved them

from death. The agitator asked Stepanov to read the letter aloud in front of all the workers at the station. This live testimonial had a strong effect on the entire working group, raising their fury against the fascist invaders even more. After reading the letter, the entire section stood up for work. No one went home until an urgent order for the front was completed. And another example of the

work of an agitator. At one time, at the grinding site, they stopped monitoring the cleanliness of workplaces, the maintenance of tools, and the order in the workshop. This affected the quality of the products. Kuznetsov consulted with the party organizer, prepared and hung out a poster on the site: "Why are you handing in a dirty tool with burrs, why is it dirty at your workplace? Your duty as a patriot is to produce products of excellent quality!" The poster touched the workers to the quick.

Its content was heatedly discussed at a special meeting of grinders. For three days in a row, after hours, they put things in order, cleaned the machines, tidied up work lockers, drawers, etc. The quality of the tools also improved markedly. In connection with this episode, I would like to draw attention

to the following. Could Kuznetsov write such a poster if he himself did not serve as an example of high labor productivity and industrial culture? And in this case, could the poster, as, indeed, any speech of an agitator, cause such a resonance? I think no. That is the strength of the agitator, party organizer, communist, that his

the word is inseparable from the deed.

Much propaganda, agitation and organizational work was carried out by the factory press. Its role in mobilizing the collectives of factories to fulfill production tasks and increasing output for the front can hardly be overestimated. A special place belongs here to the factory newspapers. A wide network of work correspondents formed around them. In addition to the factory newspapers, every shop, sometimes in

the brigades and in separate sections, published their own wall newspapers. They fought for high labor productivity, for accurate work on schedule, overfulfillment of tasks, for the production of products of excellent quality, for the economical use of every kilogram of coal, oil, metal, and a kilowatt of electricity. They fanned the flames of socialist emulation, passed on the experience of the best, criticized blunders in work, seeking their immediate elimination.

The most operational form of wall printing was the issuance of bulletins, "lightning" and combat leaflets. In the most intense, responsible periods in the life of the country or in the activities of labor collectives, they were issued daily. These types of wall printing were especially widespread in the second and third periods of the war. The so-called chalk newspapers became a new form of wall printing.

It is difficult for today's workers to imagine what it is, but at that time, when there was neither time nor paper, there were no paints, colored pencils for making, say, wall newspapers in the form that we are used to now, chalk newspapers were just

irreplaceable. How were they released? On behalf of the party committee or the party bureau, one of the communists on a special board like a school one wrote with chalk the latest information - about the situation at the fronts, about events in the country, about the achievements of the foremost workers, about labor victories, about bottlenecks, acute problems arising on one area or another. I note that the effectiveness of the speeches of the Cretaceous newspapers was very high.

I have already mentioned the personal example of communists in labor, agitation by deeds as one of the most important and effective forms of party work during the war years. And, leaving for the front, our communist gunsmiths fought the enemy in the same way as they worked, with dignity and honor. Here is just one example. Communist Mikhail Tarasovich Votyakov worked in a Stakhanovite way at the plant, where I.A. was the director. Ostroushko. Having joined the ranks of the army in the field, he skillfully commanded the calculation of an anti-tank gun, served as an example of courage and courage for the soldiers. In one of the battles, Senior Sergeant Votyakov died. "His feat," Major V. Syroezhkin wrote to the party organization of the plant on September 10, 1943, "inspires our soldiers to new and new military deeds and feats. His name is forever enrolled in the lists of the unit. His portrait hangs in the unit and the club. About him

a poem has been written.

Major Syroezhkin said that a leaflet was dedicated to the memory of Votyakov, and put it in envelope.

I would like to quote the text of this leaflet.

"Senior Sergeant M.T. Votyakov When the name of Senior Sergeant Votyakov is called out for him in gun commander Golovko answers the silence:

- Comrade Votyakov died heroically in battle with the German invaders, defending his socialist homeland. And everyone remembers this courageous communist commander, his military deeds and a feat that calls and inspires new victorious battles.

Votyakov's gun crew occupied a firing position on the outskirts of the village in full readiness to repel enemy attacks at any moment. At dawn, German tanks began to crawl out of the forest. Behind them the infantry moved in chains. There were several hundred Nazis.

As soon as the lead tank approached 600 meters, the crew opened fire on it. Already the third shell he was hit. The same fate befell the second tank, which maneuvered to get out of the shelling. The mortar wagon following him was blown into the air by a direct hit from a shell. Then came the turn for the infantry. Despite heavy losses, the Germans stubbornly tried to break

through to the outskirts of the settlement, but, having met an insurmountable wall of fire, they rolled back. Three of their attacks failed. Angry with failure, the Nazis threw aircraft into the village. 16 vultures bombarded the village, which went up in flames. And when the gun failed, the gunners took up rifles and machine guns. The Nazis did not pass through their line of defense. With the onset of darkness, the calculation on itself pulled out a padded gun, which was soon restored and again smashed the enemy. In this battle, Votyakov's crew knocked out two German tanks, destroyed a mortar, a two-horse wagon, and exterminated up to 300 enemy soldiers and officers. This is the result of high military skill, steadfastness and courage of people brought up by the

communist Votyakov, burning with indomitable hatred for the enemy. Votyakov himself died at the same time the death of a hero. His last words were the command: "For the Germans - fire!" For military exploits Votyakov was posthumously awarded the Order of the Red Banner. Fighting the enemy, as Votyakov fought, became a military tradition of the unit in which he served and

fought. His name is forever included in the list of the unit and entered into

combat history. It became immortal."

This is how they worked, how they fought, how the communists died and won. That is why the enormous prestige that they enjoyed both among the soldiers and among the working masses is

deeply logical. Just as at the front, on the eve of especially difficult battles, in the most difficult situation, the fighters carried statements to the party organizers in which they wrote: "I want to go into battle as a communist," so at the factories, in the most difficult periods of work, the influx of people into the party increased. Applications for admission to the party, written during the war years by workers and engineers, designers and employees of enterprises and institutions of the People's Commissariat of Arms, are carefully stored in the archives. People of different ages and professions, they all considered it the highest honor to be in the ranks of the Communist Party in a time of severe trials. Toolmaker P.N. Fedyukov from the factory headed by M.A. Ivanov, wrote in his statement on July 27, 1941: "At the hour when the fascist beasts broke into our Soviet home and want to conquer our people, I want to be in the ranks of the Bolshevik Party, in its Leninist ranks to fight for victory over the enemy. I assure you that I will fully justify the trust of the communists." On August 3, 1941, turner-borer N.K. turned to the party organization. Prokhorenko: "I ask you to accept me into the CPSU (b), since I want to be in the very first ranks of the fighters of the labor front against the German invaders. I will not spare my life to be worthy of the title of a member of our party, a Bolshevik.

And the design engineer A.A. Drach justified his desire to become a communist: "I want to join the CPSU (b), because the party gives a person the strength to endure and win. Now that the war has come to our land, I consider it my duty to bear my share of that great responsibility for the fate of the Motherland, which the Bolshevik Party has taken upon itself. If the party organization trusts me and accepts me into its ranks, I assure you that I will worthily carry the title of communist." He wrote his statement on October 21, 1941.

What unshakable, what lofty and bright faith people have in Lenin's party stands behind these lines! And there are many such statements.

Party organizations grew at defense industry enterprises. The best, most worthy of the workers, employees, engineers and technicians during these war years were accepted into the ranks of the party. So, only at the Bolshevik plant during the days of the defense of Leningrad in 1943, 164 people were accepted into the party. And in total, during the war, more than 5 million people were accepted as candidates for membership in the party, and about 3.5 million people became members of it.

Despite the huge losses of the Communists at the front, the party grew significantly during the four war years and became even stronger. Her prestige has increased enormously. She was the heart of the people - pure, powerful and indefatigable, a heart that fed the front and rear with the hot blood of revolutionary energy, gave the millions of masses unbending stamina, boundless courage and striving for victory. The entire Soviet people rallied around the party, rising up in a just, liberation struggle against the fascist invaders.

The Party armed the Soviet people with a clear and precise program of action, and ensured the merger of the efforts of all links in the economic mechanism, of all the country's governing bodies. She, of course, had experience in organizing the struggle against the White Guard and foreign military intervention, and it was used to the fullest. But over the past twenty years, the country's economy has become qualitatively different, and its scale has increased many times over. Enormous changes have also taken place in the social makeup of our society. The Soviet people grew spiritually and matured. Warfare has come a long way. The means and methods of warfare have changed radically. It has acquired an unprecedented intensity and scale. All this had to be taken into account by the parties in their policy.

³⁴ Party archive of the Udmurt regional committee of the CPSU. F. 352. Op. 3. D. 98. L. 100, 103.

And today, looking back at the past, assessing the complexity and scale of what was done during the years of the last war, you realize with utmost clarity: it is truly a great happiness that in the struggle against the fascist invaders the Soviet people had such a wise and seasoned political leader, such a skillful organizer and leader - the Leninist Communist Party. the consignment. Through unthinkable trials, the party confidently led the

Soviet people to victory. At the final stage of the war, the results of the scientifically substantiated activity of the party in leading the struggle at the front and the work of the home front began to be felt more and more tangibly. In 1944, the Headquarters and the General Staff planned to conduct a whole system of consecutive and mutually linked combat operations, covering the entire Soviet-German front from the Arctic to the Black Sea.

Preparations for these operations began well in advance. A sufficient amount of military equipment and weapons in the reserve of the Supreme High Command, the equipment of the active army was ensured thanks to the rhythmic work of the military industry and the systematic supply of weapons. In turn, such work of industry was largely determined by the thorough analysis of the situation on the fronts carried out by the Central Committee and the State Defense Committee, the precise identification of the probable nature of the enemy's actions, which made it possible to make the necessary changes in the structure of weapons in a timely manner, switch efforts from one of their types to another, and create new models. and ensure their mass production. The choice of the directions of the main strikes in the final period of the

war provided for the achievement not only of major military-political and strategic goals, but also ensured the restoration and commissioning of heavy industry and energy enterprises in the liberated areas, which also contributed to a more complete satisfaction of the needs of the army in the field and at the same time solving problems to disrupt the operation of the enemy's economy.

The task of reviving the regions liberated from the enemy was put on the agenda by the party as early as 1943. On August 21, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks and the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR adopted a resolution "On urgent measures to restore the national economy in areas liberated from German invaders." These measures were considered in detail at the sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR when approving state budgets. In 1945, for example, 74 billion rubles were allocated to restore the destroyed economy.

Under the Council of People's Commissars, a Committee was created for the restoration of the economy in the former temporarily occupied areas. Through him, the Central Committee of the party and the government carried out the management of the work, which began immediately after the expulsion of the enemy. All the fraternal republics, the whole country, took the most direct part in this work. The rear areas took patronage over the affected regions and cities. This disinterested help became a decisive condition for the speedy elimination of the enormous damage caused by the Nazi invaders. After all, many hundreds and thousands of industrial enterprises, mines, railway stations, residential buildings, schools, institutes and other educational institutions, hospitals, libraries lay in ruins. Incalculable damage was caused to agriculture. The economy of many regions of the European part of the Soviet Union was completely destroyed.

About 700 billion rubles - this is the amount of only direct damage caused to our country as a result of the destruction and looting of the property of state enterprises and institutions, collective farms, public organizations and personal property of citizens. The total material losses amounted to over 2.5 trillion rubles. 25 million people were left homeless. The war destroyed a third of the country's national wealth. Is it possible to compensate for the loss of twenty million lives of Soviet people, each of which is priceless ... Among the many tasks associated with the restoration of the liberated regions, the main task was the revival of

industry. October 1, 1944 GKO adopted

a resolution emphasizing: "To recognize the need in the next 2-3 years to pay special attention to the rapid restoration and development of the coal and oil industries, ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy and power plants, which are the basis for the restoration and recovery of the entire national economy"³⁵.

Some plants of the People's Commissariat of Armaments were also involved in solving this problem. In particular, plants No. 4, 6, 9, 38, 172 and others have become involved in the manufacture of equipment for the oil and coal industry. They produced machine tools, locomotives, oil engines, narrow-gauge railway platforms, compressors, belt conveyors, dividing heads, tools and other products. Even then, the production teams were tasked with the most complete use of the capacities that were freed

up in connection with the reduction in the output of military products and their transfer to the production of civilian products. Moreover, the question was put like this - products with the brand of the factories of the People's Commissariat of Arms should be the best in the country! Such a landmark was perceived and picked up by gunsmiths, and, I must say, in general, our factories began to produce products, as they were then called, consumer goods, of really high quality. This also applied to complex types of products, such as, say, metal-cutting, metal-working, metal-pressing and other machine tools - operational and universal, or such simple ones as enamelware, knives, forks,

spoons.

By the way, it was on the example of the production of spoons that I emphasized the importance of the quality of civilian products, speaking already in July 1945 at the IX plenum of the Central Committee of the trade union of workers in the arms industry:

"... If we produce spoons, then these spoons must be of really good quality, and not some kind of stalk. I was recently shown just such a spoon: it is so ugly that it is simply a shame for the one who made it. But we can make good spoons, we can give them an appropriate design, we can produce cupronickel, silver. It is necessary to make such spoons so that the buyer, when he comes to the store, first wants to buy half a dozen, and when he sees them, he would say: "No, give me a dozen of such spoons." In a word, we are talking about good, high-quality products that would attract attention."

Enterprises of the People's Commissariat for Armaments also participated in providing assistance to agriculture, including the liberated regions. In February 1944, a team of workers, employees and engineering and technical workers of one of the artillery factories of our people's commissariat appealed to all the teams of plants and factories in the Soviet Union with an appeal to increase production. It was also said in the appeal about rendering assistance to rural workers. "In the matter of providing the Red Army with food, socialist agriculture is of decisive importance," the people of the Urals wrote. - Now comes the hot time of agricultural work - the preparation and conduct of spring sowing, and above all, a good harvest largely depends on the work of the tractor fleet, and hence the provision of the Red Army and the population with food, and the industry with raw materials. Our plant, which successfully fulfills and exceeds the tasks of the State Defense Committee for the production of weapons for the Red Army, has the opportunity, like many other factories in our country, to provide great assistance to the MTS in the preparation and conduct of spring sowing, and above all in the repair of tractors, agricultural machinery and in the preparation mechanic personnel. In response to this appeal, many factories sought opportunities for the production of spare parts for tractors, early fulfillment of orders for agriculture, and assistance to sponsored collective farms, state farms,

and MTS. For example, a plant headed by F.K. Chebotarev, patronized seven machine and tractor stations and a state farm.

³⁵ Decisions of the party and government on economic issues. M., 1968. T. 3. S. 219–220.

The plant staff helped them to set up repair shops and repair tractors and agricultural machines. For these purposes, 12 machine tools, about 6 thousand units of various tools, a large amount of rolled metal, sheet material, casting, and various parts were allocated. The workers also helped in the repair of agricultural machinery, leaving at a particularly busy time for the village in the MTS. The guild party organizations carried out a great deal of mass political work among the rural workers. The most prepared communists were sent to all sponsored MTS to work as secretaries of party organizations.

Fierce battles were still going on at the front, the enemy was making desperate attempts to resist the unstoppable onslaught of the Red Army, to avoid collapse, and the party not only consistently increased the scope of restoration work in the liberated areas, but also began to gradually transfer the production capacities of a number of enterprises to the production of peaceful products, recalled from the front for work in the national economy of party and Soviet workers, production managers, specialists, skilled workers.

This work began to unfold long before the radical turning point in the war, but after it became especially active. The fact that, along with solving the most acute problems of waging an unprecedentedly complex and intense war, which continued to divert huge human and material resources, the Party launched work on problems of a purely peaceful nature, perhaps the most clearly manifested the maturity and vitality of the socialist social and state system, remarkable the possibilities of a planned economy based on public ownership. The centuries-old history of wars did not know anything like this. Not a single state in the past conducted, and indeed could not conduct, simultaneously major offensive operations at the front and grandiose creative work in the rear. And the successful fulfillment by the Soviet people and their Armed Forces of this two-pronged task convincingly confirmed the correctness of the war program worked out by the Party, the effectiveness of the bold, innovative, and at the same time realistic leadership of the Central Committee. The liberated areas being restored at the height of the war immediately began to contribute

their contribution to the common cause of defeating the enemy.

Plants returning from evacuation were put into operation. It cost a lot of work to revive them: after all, in most cases, production buildings, administrative buildings, and residential buildings were destroyed. Communications didn't work. The enemy has turned many medical and cultural institutions into ruins. But people returned here, returned to live and work, and it was necessary to create conditions for this for them.

And again, as always in difficult times in the past, the Communists had their say. They led the remarkable patriotic movement of volunteer brigades that was born among the workers, who worked at construction sites, on the restoration of dwellings, schools, hospitals, children's and cultural institutions in their free time from their main work. When planning the restoration of armaments enterprises in the places from which they were evacuated, the people's commissariat decided that each revived plant should acquire independence, have a closed production cycle and, in terms of its return, work no worse, but better than before the war.

Restoring the plant meant not only rebuilding its buildings, reviving communications, and providing normal conditions for the life and work of people. This meant to establish the production process - from the organization of the procurement base to the release of final products, to expand the tool economy. Large-scale

restoration work was carried out at factories in the Moscow region, in Leningrad and Kyiv, in a group of Tula factories and in other areas. At the same time, it was often not just about organizing production within its former framework, but about expanding it. So, the plant, which was headed by A.I. Zakharyin, and then A.S. Spiridonov, a whole plant with first-class equipment was also attached. In 1945, they almost reached the pre-war level in their own way.

machine park and continued to increase the capacity of armaments factories in Tula.

The peculiarity of the work on the restoration of armaments factories was that, as a rule, not all the workers who worked on them before returned to their former places. This is understandable: after all, the front still needed huge amounts of weapons and military equipment, and factories, including those evacuated at one time from the now liberated regions, worked in the Volga region, in the Urals, in Siberia and Central Asia with a full load. And it was impossible to allow the re-evacuation to affect the fulfillment of tasks for the production of weapons for the front. Therefore, the leaders and party organizations of the factories evacuated to the east of the country in 1941–1942 were faced with the task of securing a cadre of engineering and technical workers and workers in the developed areas.

It was not an easy task. Those who evacuated two or three years ago with their enterprises, naturally, sought to return to their native places. And it was necessary to convince people of the need to stay here, in the Urals or in Siberia, to make sure that they themselves did not want to leave.

We began to think about this, to take steps aimed at solving this problem, one might say, immediately, as soon as people began to arrive in new places, and we did not weaken our efforts for a single day. Of course, at first it was very difficult, and things did not go further than providing workers with at least some kind of housing and a minimum of cultural and community services. But already by 1943, more effort, money and time began to be allocated to improve the working and living conditions of people.

However, some economic leaders treated the issues of everyday life as third-rate, caring only about the fulfillment of planned targets. It is clear that such an approach to the matter was at least shortsighted; after all, if we think about tomorrow, then without creating the necessary conditions for normal labor activity and cultural recreation of a person as the main productive force, it is simply impossible to ensure a truly stable progress in production.

In the winter and early spring of 1943, together with the people's commissar's brigade, I happened to visit a number of factories of the people's commissariat. Along with production issues, we also dealt with the issues of the household arrangements for workers. Of course, we have dealt with this issue before and tried to do everything possible to improve people's lives. In any case, I have always considered it my duty - both party, official, and simply human. But to be honest, in the conditions of the first years of the war, some of the leaders, and the people themselves, who lived in very difficult conditions, often simply neglected life. The main thing was to defend the Fatherland from the enemy, and for the sake of this one could endure, overcome everything. Now another time has come.

After inspecting the shops, I invited the director of the plant, M.A. Ivanov and party organizer of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks at the plant G.K. Sokolov to the village, where the workers who arrived here from other cities, from the countryside, were accommodated.

And a bitter lump rolled up in my throat. The village consisted of the so-called roofs - above the ground only a roof with a hut, and the "room" itself was in the ground.

We were forced to build such barracks in 1941-1942, since we had no funds, no materials, no time then, and people needed to live somewhere. We walked around every single barracks, talked to people. They did not complain, no, they understood that this situation was temporary and caused by the war. But that made it even harder on my heart. Of particular concern and concern was the fact that, apparently, neither the administration, nor the party and trade union organizations of the plant really cared about improving or at least facilitating the living conditions of workers.

Have you been here, comrade director? I asked Ivanov when we left the last barracks. - I used to, Comrade People's

Commissar ... - When? - I don't

remember ... It's been a long time.

- And you, comrade party
organizer? - About a month

ago. "Shame on you, comrade leaders! After all, people work from morning to night sparing no effort, and you do not take care of them! I am not saying: give people tomorrow comfortable houses and bright apartments. But the most basic - linen, water, fuel - you can provide today! Many shortcomings

were found in other factories. I instructed the responsible workers of the People's Commissariat to comprehensively study the question of a radical improvement in the living conditions and living conditions of workers and employees. Soon this issue was submitted for consideration by the collegium of the people's commissariat. But even before it, I wrote and sent a letter to the directors of factories, heads of main departments and departments:

"The living conditions of workers at a number of NKV enterprises continue to remain unsatisfactory. The work

carried out in this area is largely of a campaign nature. There is not and is not felt a constant, daily concern for improving the living conditions of the workers, unremitting, personal control of plant directors over this most important sector, which most directly affects the implementation of the program. When visiting factories and getting acquainted with the everyday

environment surrounding the workers, you are convinced that poor living conditions are explained not so much by the difficulties of wartime (lack of housing, bedding, soap, etc.), but by the negligence, inactivity of the workers assigned to this business, outrageous on their part, neglect of the elementary needs and demands of people, whose life they are obliged to take care of. There is no other way to explain the fact that at a number of factories in dormitories and barracks the floors are rarely washed, the walls and ceilings are covered with

dust, the trestle beds are sometimes not washed from the moment they are installed. People sleep on dirty trestle beds and bunks, for months without undressing and without changing clothes because there is no place to wash it, in some places in connection with this, pediculosis has become an everyday phenomenon. It would seem that the simplest thing is that boiled water is not always and not always available, but where it is, it is often contained in rusty, uncleaned tanks, etc.

In the production itself, in the workshops and in the plant management apparatus, one can meet a significant number of people of a completely neglected appearance: they have not been shaved for a long time, not cut, working in padded jackets, hats, regardless of the temperature of the room. People are sleeping near boilers, stoves, in the premises of the plant management, in the workshops. Production commanders - foremen, shift managers, workshops, factory management employees - very often do not monitor their appearance themselves and therefore, naturally, not only do not pull up their subordinates in this sense, but they themselves serve as a negative example for them.

This situation is least of all reminiscent of the working conditions of a military plant, where, given the high culture of production and the especially responsible nature of the tasks, smartness, accuracy, and discipline of the workers are absolutely mandatory requirements. I suggest: 1. Without entrusting this matter to

anyone,

personally go around the barracks, hostels, household institutions, sanitary checkpoints, baths, laundries, etc., carefully check their work and issue an order, providing for the necessary specific measures, deadlines for their implementation and responsible persons. The order to submit to me through the housing department of the NKV no later than May 15 this year. d. 2. To convene the heads of the main

sections of the work of the plant and demand from them that they monitor their appearance and demand the same from the workers subordinate to them. Prohibit employees from spending the night in workrooms,

as well as being in them in outerwear. 3. Oblige employees of the main departments and departments of the NKV when visiting factories

verify compliance with the instructions of this letter. The

People's Commissariat constantly kept in view the issues of improving the living conditions and consumer services for workers. In January 1944, the VIII plenum of the Central Committee of the trade union of workers in the armaments industry was held. It raised the issues of improving working and living conditions in the most serious way. I also spoke at the

plenum. Here is an excerpt from the transcript of the speech: "... It is now necessary to come to grips with housing construction at our enterprises, especially at those that have been evacuated into the interior of the country. Naturally, at the first moment of the evacuation and in the next one and a half to two years, while we deployed and raised production, our main task was to organize production, it was necessary to increase the production of weapons, and while we lived in tents, in dugouts, etc. Now we need to to refuse dugouts and tents, it is necessary to build houses. Let them not be comfortable three- and five-story houses with bathrooms and other various pleasant and useful things that we cannot do now, let them be barrack-type houses, but let them be warm, dry, pleasant rooms where you can come to read a newspaper, so that you can be properly serviced, linen washed, new bedding, etc. This is the task that faces in 1944 in the field of housing construction. The first work to solve this problem is to eliminate dugouts and tents at our factories, to transfer at least the simplest houses, but ordinary houses, generally accepted

type.

Then, I think, the second task is to build ... comfortable houses, if not with separate baths, then with a common shower per section, per floor, depending on the project, always with your own laundry, etc. You need to have your own rest room, since we cannot provide everyone with a separate apartment. Therefore, it is necessary to give a small rest room to separate houses, it is necessary to do this somehow. This matter must be dealt with without fail, and we must take up this matter, and all sorts of washbasins, finned pipes must be looked for on the spot. If we rely on our uncle, then nothing will come of it. You know how hard it is with building and auxiliary materials, it must be used to restore the areas destroyed by the Germans, previously occupied, now abandoned by them. This is quite natural, we have all the possibilities, and some enterprises have shown that they can do this business.

Take a group of factories in the Urals - they build houses themselves, make ribbed pipes for heating themselves, make columns for bathtubs themselves, they themselves have begun to make bathtubs, they themselves make roofing sheets, etc. This business needs to be dealt with. We must improve living conditions. But this is also not enough. It is our duty now to work with you also on the cultural organization of our workers.

It is necessary to have small clubs at small enterprises, something like Houses of Culture at more serious enterprises. We must understand that, having transported workers somewhere, we cannot keep them for a year, two, ten years without giving them the opportunity to at least watch a movie. We cannot continue to live like this. We must prepare our cultural institutions. We cannot tolerate such a situation any longer, that patients are taken in at the plant itself, and, besides this, you can't go anywhere to be treated. Do family members have to go to the midwife and be treated by her? We can't take this anymore

position.

We must also deal with the construction of hospitals, build hospitals, or, in any case, if not hospitals, then outpatient clinics must be built at each of our enterprises. We must create branches of outpatient clinics, since we have enterprises that have 2-3 workers' settlements 6-7 kilometers away, try to walk around.

Since more and more women are being drawn into production in our country, we must take care of the female worker and, above all, set up nurseries and kindergartens. Therefore, now we are planning, I would say, in much larger volumes, this type of construction -

construction of residential buildings, nurseries, kindergartens, outpatient clinics, and this, I think, will be correct. It is necessary that the factories deal with this question properly, that the trade-union organizations take these measures under their personal control.

Further, comrades, I would like to say a few words about the tasks that we have, although this has already been said, I still want to repeat, in the field of our further work to bring our economy into real order.

What do I want to

say? We have many enterprises that work well, which, for example, have good settlements, have houses in which people can be accommodated, have dispensaries, some have hospitals, clubs. But that's all. There is nothing more. There are no roads, no sewerage, no connection with other industrial centers. The worker has a good factory, has a good dwelling, but one cannot get from the factory to the dwelling and from the dwelling to the factory only because of the lack of roads.

It is necessary to deal with the issue, as they say in common parlance, combing the plant so that it is smooth. Take the

plant where Comrade A.A. Tomilin is the director. He has the first, and the second, and the third, and the fourth, but it's still not good to live there. There are no roads, and in spring and autumn, not only cars, but also horses do not pass, and you can only get through on foot. I'm not

talking about communication with the station. There are such days when nothing can be reached, and there is no need to say that you can bring metal if it has not come to the station itself. Take the plant

where Comrade Rudnev K.I. A snowstorm is rising, and not only home, but it is impossible to get from shop to shop. A rope is pulled, and this rope is used to walk from shop to shop. I ask: why is this happening? They answer me: such conditions. This is not an excuse. If good roads were built, trees were planted - and the plant has been operating for two years - then the conditions would be different. So, all this needs to be done, and done with love, otherwise nothing will come of it. Everyone very colorfully tells how they walk from shop to shop on a rope, but in essence they do nothing to improve the situation. It is necessary, along with production, to really deal with the issues of improving working and living conditions ... "No matter

how hard it was with the funds and resources that the war absorbed in huge volumes, N, K of the CPSU (b) and the State

Defense Committee provided, especially in the final stages of the war, the allocation of significant funds for the construction of housing, medical and cultural institutions.

I well remember how happy the workers of the city of Izhevsk responded with a small report in the local newspaper about a completely, it would seem, insignificant event. When among the archival materials I came across a yellowed issue of this newspaper, before my mind's eye vividly appeared in a special way enlightened faces. Apparently, it was no coincidence that then, in 1943, this note was crossed out in red pencil: "In the city of Izhevsk, the construction of a new building of

the State Circus was completed. The working people of the city received a wonderful gift. The new building, colossal in its size, has 1850 seats for spectators, spacious foyers, auxiliary rooms.

On November 28, 1943, in a solemn atmosphere, the transfer of the new building by its builders to the circus administration took place. Delegates from the 19th city party conference, Stakhanovites - the builders of the circus, and numerous representatives of the working people of the city came to the meeting devoted to this event.

After the meeting, the guests were shown the first performance, which opened the winter season yesterday in the new building of the circus. The audience watched the extensive program with interest.

There were many facts like this already at that difficult time of the height of the war, and then they became more and more. Evidence of ordinary, normal, that is, not military, but peaceful life spoke of a huge, inexhaustible margin of safety lurking in our Soviet, socialist system, strengthened people's conviction that victory in the Great Patriotic War would certainly be ours. This was historical optimism in action. Optimism,

the source of which was the policy of the party, imbued even in an extremely tense and cruel time with the thought of a working man, concern for his welfare. This concern, embodied in the concrete affairs of today, contributing to the satisfaction to one degree or another of the needs and demands of the working masses, was at the same time concern for the future of the country, for the physical and moral health of the people.

The Party did everything to ensure that even in the harsh wartime, the Soviet people continued to live a full-blooded life. She thought about the development of science and culture, the formation of the younger generation. In besieged Leningrad, the Heroic Symphony of D. Shostakovich sounded, the front and rear were conquered by Vasily Terkin - the hero of the wonderful poem by A. Tvardovsky, the Bolshoi Theater gave brilliant performances, scientists made the greatest discoveries, builders erected Palaces of Culture, schools, kindergartens ...

All these were touches to our coming victory, the breath of which was felt more and more clearly in the winter of 1944/45. We noticed its approach, like the approach of spring, by many signs: both Sovinformburo reports on new and new successes of our troops and defeats of enemy troops, and the publication of Decrees of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on rewarding formations, units, soldiers, factories and home front workers, and messages about commissioning restored enterprises, launching power plants, mastering the production of new types of peaceful products, and

much, much more. We were looking forward to victory and did everything to bring it closer. At the same time, we understood that, although fascist Germany had lost almost all of its allies and found itself in complete political isolation, although the Wehrmacht suffered crushing defeats in 1944, losing over one and a half million people and a huge amount of weapons on the Soviet-German front, despite all this, a hard and stubborn struggle lies ahead for the complete defeat of the enemy.

By the beginning of 1945, the Wehrmacht opposed the Red Army with over 200 divisions and brigades numbering almost 4 million people. They had 56,000 guns and mortars, over 8,000 tanks and assault guns, and more than 4,000 combat aircraft. In addition, the Nazi leadership also used most of its so-called reserve army. All this had to be smashed, forced to

unconditional surrender. To accomplish this task, the Red Army now had

everything necessary. During the period of preparation for offensive operations of the final period of the war, our troops were saturated with artillery pieces, especially large-caliber ones, mortars, cannon weapons for aviation, small arms and ammunition for them, and optical instruments. The advantage over the enemy was further enhanced by the high offensive impulse of the Soviet soldiers, the overwhelming superiority of the Soviet military art.

In the last military winter, quantitative and qualitative changes in the artillery park began to especially affect the growth of the firepower of our troops. If we take for comparison the two largest operations of the final period of the war - Belorussian and Berlin, we can note in the latter a seemingly insignificant increase in the total number of guns - only 15 percent. But on the other hand, the share of heavy artillery has grown to an unprecedented size, its number - primarily 100-mm guns and 152-mm howitzer guns - has increased by almost one and a half times. Such saturation with artillery, especially large calibers, was not in any operation of the Great Patriotic War. As many guns participated in the defeat of the Berlin enemy grouping as there were in all

countries around the world at the end of the First World War. Meanwhile, the arms industry steadily reduced the supply of guns and mortars to the troops. In the same Berlin operation, they decreased by 2.7 times compared to the Belarusian one, and by 5.2 times compared to the Battle of Kursk. In particular, only 15 BS-3 100-mm cannons were sent to the 2nd Belorussian Front during March 1945 before the start of the Berlin operation - the front was so fully provided with artillery.

In 1945, the production of the well-deserved 45-mm anti-tank gun of the 1937 model of the year decreased, but the production of 45-mm modernized, 57-mm and 100-mm heavy anti-tank guns increased. Slightly more than in the second half of 1944, 85-mm and 122-mm guns were produced in the first two quarters of 1945, but the production of guns for self-propelled artillery installations did not increase. The production of naval artillery guns was steadily declining. The emphasis on quality, which we

already made in the course of achieving a radical turning point in the war, and then steadily strengthened, bore fruit. The Red Army was equipped with the best field and tank artillery in the world. Our tank guns were superior to the corresponding enemy weapons both in caliber and in muzzle energy, and self-propelled artillery, although somewhat inferior in caliber to enemy self-propelled artillery, our self-propelled guns, unlike enemy ones, were closed and well armored. The creation and development in production of new high-quality weapons systems, and above all guns of larger

calibers, led to a slight decrease in the total volume of artillery output in the final period of the war. Nevertheless, on an average year, we gave the front about 100,000 guns of all types and calibers and more than 70,000 mortars. This is, respectively, one and a half and almost five times more than the industry of fascist Germany and the countries occupied by it produced.

The total number of Soviet artillery increased fivefold during the war, and small arms - 22 times.

Such was the outcome with which the arms industry approached the event, crowning the Great Patriotic War. April 16, 1945 began a grandiose

Berlin operation. After two weeks of stubborn, fierce fighting, the Red Banner of Victory was hoisted over the Reichstag. A

big, bright, joyful holiday has come to our Soviet street. We fought for him for almost one and a half thousand days and nights, fought at the front and in the rear, fought with the whole country - from young to old, not

sparing

ourselves. And we won. It was the natural finale of the decisive and uncompromising struggle between the forces of progress, freedom and justice against the forces of reaction, slavery and obscurantism,

the struggle for the triumph of life on Earth. This was a great victory for a great people, rallied around the party of Lenin and led by it, a people who defended their revolutionary gains, with honor withstood such severe trials as no one else had ever experienced.

Afterword

So my work on memoirs came to an end. A lot has been written, but memory continued to recreate pictures of the past. Many more facts of the past, many people could be told. Unfortunately, many events are not reflected in the book, people who fully deserve it are not mentioned. Apparently, no one can tell in detail about everything that has been experienced, about everyone who happened to meet on the path of life.

I consider it my duty to once again express my heartfelt gratitude to my comrades, friends, everyone with whom life has brought me together - and to those who, directly standing at the machines, forged the weapon of Victory, and to those who, at the drawing boards of design bureaus, sought to make this weapon more powerful enemy, and those who worked in the departments and departments of the People's Commissariat, and then the Ministry of Arms. Others are no longer alive. Others are on a well-deserved rest. But there are also many who continue to serve the socialist Fatherland in various posts.

I devoted most of my memoirs to the period of the Great Patriotic War. In my opinion, this does not require much explanation. This war in the history of our country and in the biographies of many Soviet people has become the frontier that almost every day reminds of itself. I had the opportunity to take part in the heroic struggle of the Soviet people, to go through with them both the bitterness of initial failures at the front and the joy of subsequent victories. It is also natural that I am talking primarily about that sector of

the nationwide struggle against the enemy, on which I was placed by the party - about the gunsmiths. They say that a drop of water reflects the properties of the entire oceans. So the deeds and accomplishments of gunsmiths reflected the great feat that during the years of the last war was accomplished by all the Soviet people at the front and in the rear. Hour after hour, day after day, our Victory in the Great Patriotic

War was forged. It was a natural outcome of the battle between two opposing socio-political systems, economies, and ideologies. History shows that the side that has decisive advantages wins the war in the end. The crushing defeat of the international imperialist reaction, which equipped for the next "crusade" against the world's first socialist state an unprecedentedly powerful military machine in the person of fascist Germany, its allies and satellites, confirmed with renewed vigor the validity of the conclusion, which was formulated by V.I. . Lenin. This conclusion is that invincible is the people in which the workers and peasants for the most part recognize, feel and see that they are defending their own, Soviet power - the power of the working people, that they are defending the cause, the victory of which will provide them and their children with the opportunity to enjoy all the benefits of culture, all the creations of human labor. And it is by no means accidental that the Soviet country emerged from the war not only not weakened, as the reactionary circles of imperialism counted on, but, on the contrary, even stronger politically and militarily. It is no coincidence that the "miracle" of its rapid

post-war revival. All this shows how strong are the roots of socialism as a socio-political system. No one can uproot them from the mass of the people, no matter how ultra-modern weapons of intimidation and death the enemies of socialism arm themselves for this, no matter what ideological, propaganda tricks and tricks they indulge in.

The unprecedented epic of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people lasted 1418 days. And every day of this epic has become not only tragic, but also the brightest, most glorious page in the centuries-old history of mankind. I think that in my words there is not the slightest contradiction. Because the bitter and heavy sacrifices of our people were not in vain. Because the Soviet people opposed the unprecedented cruelty, vandalism, obscurantism of the aggressor with humanism, greatness of spirit, unparalleled courage and mass heroism. Because our just cause - the cause of socialism, the cause of the freedom of peoples, social and national justice - finally won! Undoubtedly, this was a turning point in human history. It is terrible to imagine what

consequences the implementation of fascist plans for world domination could have. And if this did not happen, it was only because it was the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics that thwarted these disastrous plans for mankind.

And today, as before the Second World War, the policy of imperialism is increasingly

aggressiveness is prominent. Therefore, high vigilance against imperialist intrigues is vital. But her vigilance alone is not enough today. We need a firm, active, offensive struggle to prevent war. Everyone who cares about the world, who cares about the fate of mankind, should participate in this struggle.

The adventurism of imperialism, that invariable companion of its aggressiveness, has now assumed an extremely dangerous character. The readiness of the militant politicians and strategists of the West to win world domination at any cost ultimately threatens with a global military conflict, as a result of which there may be neither winners nor losers, the danger of the death of world civilization becomes quite real.

As it did for more than forty years ago, imperialism sees socialism as the main obstacle to its world domination. Then it was one country - the Soviet Union, now - the world system of socialism. With the ease characteristic

of adventurers, the creators of today's aggressive imperialist course do not want to take into account the political realities that exist in the modern world. And yet these realities speak for themselves. If at the beginning of the Second World War the share of socialism accounted for a tenth of world industrial production, now only the CMEA countries produce more than a third. The colonial system of imperialism collapsed, and many newly-liberated countries chose the non-capitalist path of development, the path of socialist orientation. An important factor in international relations directed against imperialism is the non-aligned movement. The communist parties are strengthening their influence among the masses.

The narrowing of the sphere of imperialist domination in the world, the aggravation of all the deep-seated contradictions of capitalism convincingly testify to the final and irrevocable loss of the historical initiative by it, to a radical change in the balance of forces in the international arena in favor of socialism, progress and peace. Today, the fatal inevitability of war is no longer there; there is an objective opportunity to curb the imperialist aggressors and preserve world peace. This difficult task is quite achievable given the current alignment of forces, given the existing approximate military-strategic parity. In modern conditions, there is simply no reasonable alternative to the peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems. However, contrary to this absolutely obvious fact, imperialism, primarily American, continues to hatch aggressive plans. The strategy of "direct confrontation" adopted by the United States in the 1980s can serve as a clear example of how the class, animal hatred of imperialist circles for socialism takes precedence over a sense of reality, or even just common sense.

We cannot fail to see that this aggressive strategy is being provided with an appropriate material base in the form of nuclear and other weapons. Particular importance is attached to achieving military-technical superiority over the USSR and other socialist countries. All this makes the threat of world nuclear war emanating from imperialism a harsh reality of our day. That is why, unfortunately, even today everything

connected with the war has not become the subject of research only by historians and archaeologists, has not become an attribute exclusively of the past. The present warns loudly of the growing threat of a new war. That is why the experience of the Great Patriotic War is turned not so much, perhaps, into the past as into the future. He calls our people to vigilance. He teaches every Soviet person resilience and courage, purposefulness and selflessness in the work to strengthen the defense of their native country. It demands firmness and activity from all of us in the struggle for peace. Like no one else, the Soviet people know what war is. They also

know what is needed in order to curb and crush any aggressor. The policy of the Communist Party, in which peace-loving initiatives in the foreign policy arena are merged with unremitting concern for the defense capability of the USSR, enjoys undivided support

the Soviet people, the approval of all progressive mankind. The victory in the last war, which went to the Soviet people at such a high price, taught them a lot. It showed that the aggressive policy of imperialism, if it is not given a timely rebuff, can bring incalculable disasters to all mankind. It showed that socialism is the main bulwark in the peoples' struggle for peace, the main force capable of properly rebuffing imperialist aggression. It also showed that the Soviet people are consistent, courageous and staunch fighters for peace, freedom and independence of peoples. Protecting the world is one of the main testaments that he left to our party, to the Soviet

State Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. And the Soviet people are sacredly faithful to this covenant.

Peace is our ideal, the ideal of socialism. And that is why, as long as imperialism threatens the world, we are not going to let go of our weapons. In our hands it serves exclusively the cause of curbing the aggressor, the cause of social progress and the security of peoples, the cause of freedom. And this is a fact of great

historical significance. Indeed, at all times, weapons, being at the disposal of the exploiting classes, were a means of armed violence, expansion and enslavement of states and peoples, served predatory, aggressive purposes. Only with the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution, with the building of a new, socialist society, the very nature of which is alien to violence, did it begin to serve exclusively humane and just purposes. Paying tribute with gratitude to the Soviet weapons that saved mankind from the threat of fascist enslavement, it is not by chance that people of good will speak of them as weapons of Victory.

The Land of Soviets extends its hand to all who are ready to fight for lasting peace on Earth, for the freedom and independence of peoples. Peacefulness is our unshakable principle. However, let no one mistake our peacefulness for weakness. We have everything to defend our freedom and independence, to defeat any aggressor - and the wise leadership of the party, and the power of our economy, and the viability of our political system, and the Armed Forces with vast combat experience, equipped with the most modern weapons.

The Soviet people are directed to the future, they are concentrating all their forces on the implementation of grandiose constructive plans. But they sacredly keep the memory of the last war, of the trials that our Motherland had to endure. During the harsh war years, our people, as one person, rose to its defense. Everything possible, and often impossible, was done at the front and in the rear to defeat the aggressor. In the crucible of the Great Patriotic War, the unity of the people, welded together by the commonality of communist goals and ideals, by selfless devotion to the great cause of the Leninist party, was tempered like steel. The soul, the heart of this indestructible unity was the Communist Party. Lenin's words are widely known that in wartime the ideal of the party of the proletariat is a belligerent party. Fighting not only with weapons in hand face to face with the enemy, but also on the front of economic support for the defeat of the enemy, fighting with a passionate, uplifting word and personal example of each of her communist fighters. This is exactly what our party was like in wartime. At the front, three million of her sons died a heroic death. And in the rear, the communists were in the most difficult, hottest sectors, they were always ahead. The war once again confirmed that the leading role of the Communist Party reflects our very

life, the very dialectics of the development of Soviet society. Armed with Marxist-Leninist teachings, the Party imparts a planned, scientifically substantiated character to the struggle of the Soviet people for communism both in times of peace and in times of war.

The CPSU exists for the people and serves the people. The most characteristic feature of its political image, its all-embracing activity, which manifested itself with extraordinary brightness during the years of the Great Patriotic War and finds daily confirmation in today's life, is the inextricable connection of the party with the masses, its close

unity with the people. This is exactly how V.I. Lenin. "In order to serve the masses and express their correctly conscious interests," he emphasized, "the vanguard, the organization, must conduct all its activities in the mass, drawing from it all the best forces without exception, checking at every step, carefully and objectively, whether communication is maintained with the masses, is she alive. Thus, and only thus, does the vanguard educate and enlighten the masses, expressing their interests, teaching them how to organize, directing all the activities of the masses along the path of a conscious class policy.

And if the Party correctly expresses what the people are aware of, if the masses see with their own eyes that its policy fully corresponds to their interests and aspirations, the word of the Party finds a lively response in the minds and hearts of millions, and its cause becomes the vital cause of the entire people.

Such has always been and remains the policy of our Party. And the brightest, timeless, imperishable example of this is the Great Patriotic War. It demonstrated to the whole world the great, truly irresistible unity of the Soviet people, their unshakable solidarity around Lenin's party. The leadership of the Party is the decisive source of our world-historic victory in the last war. And this is the main conclusion from everything that was experienced during the hard times of the war. It was thanks to the leadership of the Communist Party that the world's first country of victorious socialism was able to

defeat the fascist invaders. It was thanks to the leadership of the Party that the objective prerequisites for our victory were supplemented by the subjective activity of the broad masses of the people. It was thanks to the leadership of the party that real socialism not only withstood the tests of unprecedented severity and intensity, but also convincingly proved its superiority over capitalism in all areas - economic, political, ideological, military.

Our socialist economy, in terms of the growth rate of military production and the ability to provide the front with everything necessary, turned out to be much more efficient than the economy of fascist Germany, which was transferred to a war footing long before the start of the war and subjugated the economies of almost all the largest countries in Europe. With smaller industrial capacities and a narrower base of strategic raw materials and materials, the USSR during the war years produced twice as much weapons and military equipment and of better quality than the enemy.

The political superiority of the USSR over the aggressor was indisputable. The social and moral-political unity of the Soviet people, their ardent patriotism, the indestructible friendship of the peoples are the powerful driving forces of our society, the likes of which have not been and cannot be in the imperialist states. Born by the revolutionary creativity of the working people, the Soviet form of statehood - a form of genuine democracy - has proved its vitality, the ability to quickly and dynamically solve the most complex military-mobilization and military-economic tasks.

The defeat of fascism marked an outstanding victory of socialist ideology over the ideology of imperialism. Marxist-Leninist ideas, having captured the minds of millions of people, have become an inexhaustible source of the inflexible morale of the Soviet people, their unparalleled heroism, their remarkable military and labor feats in the name of Victory. The consciousness of the justice of the war in defense of the socialist Fatherland increased the strength of the Soviet people tenfold. And finally, the socialist military organization, Soviet military science and military art have demonstrated their undeniable superiority over the military organization, military science and military art of Nazi Germany. On the Soviet-German front, the main forces of the fascist bloc - 607 divisions - were defeated and captured. This is almost three and a half times more than on all other fronts of World War II. Soviet troops inflicted on the enemy four-fifths of all his losses in manpower and over three-quarters in weapons and

military equipment.

Speaking about the main sources of the USSR's victory in the Great Patriotic War, I want to once again emphasize its regularity. All attempts by the bourgeois falsifiers of history to prove its accident are nothing but the fulfillment of the social order of the militant forces of imperialism, who dream of the unattainable - of class revenge for defeat in the historical confrontation with socialism. And false versions that the war with Russia was lost allegedly due to Hitler's mistakes, difficult climatic and geographical conditions, and similar fables are intended to introduce into the minds of people the idea of the possibility of such a revenge. But the fact of the matter is that any calculations for revenge are obviously absurd. The Soviet Union, the defensive alliance of the fraternal socialist countries of the Warsaw Treaty Organization, has sufficient forces and means to

reliably defend peaceful labor and the revolutionary gains of their peoples. No one and nothing can shake our determination to defend the cause of socialism and peace on Earth! Since the end of the Great Patriotic War, the Soviet Armed Forces have changed beyond recognition. Their combat power far exceeds that of the Red Army and Navy during the last war. This power, as before, is based on the Soviet social and state system, on the indestructible socio-political and ideological unity of the Soviet people, and on the

successes of communist construction. It is provided by the defense industries, the activities of the relevant research institutions and design bureaus. Today's gunsmiths honorably carry the baton of labor prowess and glory, adopted by them from the older generations. They are able to create and ensure the production of the required number of any modern means of armed struggle in the shortest possible time. Defense enterprises carefully preserve, widely and creatively use the wealth of experience gained during the last war. In strong, close-knit teams of gunsmiths, and now there are many those who, at a very young age, rose at the call of the party to open-hearth furnaces, machine tools, conveyors and gave products to the front. These people are true masters of their craft, selflessly devoted to him. But the years go by, and there

are fewer and fewer participants in the Great Patriotic War ... That is why the active, creative, thoughtful work of local history museums, museums of armaments enterprises, rooms of labor glory - in a word, all the noble work of collecting, systematizing, exhibiting materials relating to the Great Patriotic War.

Preserving everything related to the heroic past of labor collectives, preserving in the name of educating a worthy successor to our and future generations is an important task of the party, Komsomol, trade union organizations, for the solution of which neither effort nor time can be spared. The generation that bore the Great Patriotic War on its shoulders has a worthy

change.

Let the appearance of factories have changed radically compared to the period of the last war, let them produce immeasurably more complex products, let, finally, the gunsmiths themselves have stepped far ahead in terms of professional training, knowledge, and general culture - I was happy and proud to recognize my acquaintances in them since those distant pre-war and war years, the features: devotion to the cause, enthusiasm, organization, responsibility, reliability. And how could it be otherwise? Then, during the war years, weapons of Victory were created and sent to the front at these factories. And now the weapons with which our industry equips the Soviet Armed Forces serve to secure the reliable defense of the gains of socialism, prevent war, and serve peace. *November 1984*